

KCC Newsletter

August, 2025

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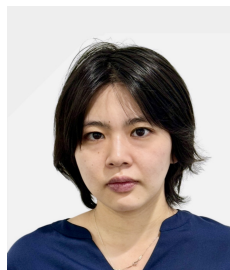
Vol.
112

Exchange Programs with Sister & Friendship Cities of Kashiwa

The 16th (2025) Kashiwa City Youth Delegation to Chengde City: Finalists Announced

This year, Kashiwa celebrates the 41st anniversary of its friendship city affiliation with Chengde City in Hebei Province, China. We are proud to have such a long history of mutual youth exchange programs, and we are renewing our commitment to further promote our friendship.

The four delegates are Ryota Takahagi, Yuna Hayashi, Yaya Konno, and Megumi Ishikawa. They will be led by the delegation leader Miu Azuma. The delegates will participate in four orientation sessions to learn necessary knowledge for their dispatch and exchange, including information about China. They will depart on August 21st, crossing the Great Wall to reach Rohe (the old name of the region). They will experience life in a foreign country through a homestay and interact with the people of Chengde through various programs. As the saying goes, "Seeing is believing," and we hope that they will return home on August 26th, having grown and matured through their precious experience.



Ms. Miu Azuma,
the delegation leader



Delegates to Chengde

Online International Exchange Salon

"Easy Japanese" (6/19)

We had Japanese language instructor Tomoe Uchida as our lecturer and learned the Japanese expressions that use parts of the body.

We often use expressions like "Ano hito wa kao ga hiroi" (literally, "That person has a wide face."; semantically, "That person knows a lot of people."), "Atama ga kireru" (literally, "The head can be cut."; semantically, "Sharp/clever."), "Te wo kashite kudasai" (literally, "Please lend your hand."; semantically, "Please help."), and to Mr. X, who will be on a business trip tomorrow, "Ashi wa arimasu ka" (literally, "Do you have a leg?"; semantically, "Do you have transportation?"). When asked Ashi wa arimasu ka, Mr. X would say yes and touch his leg. How should we rephrase this question to convey the original meaning to Mr. X?

In the workshop, the participants were divided into the roles of a Japanese person and a foreigner. They tried various rephrasings to find Japanese that conveys the meaning. One participant commented, "It was difficult. I will try to speak from the listener's perspective, especially the words I take for granted."

Well Prepared Means No Worries - International Exchange Bus Tour (6/21)

Disaster Prevention Experience at Western Chiba Prefectural Disaster Prevention Center and Tour of Shonan Michinoeki Roadside Station

A total of 22 people, Japanese and non-Japanese, participated in the bus tour. At the Disaster Prevention Center, we were astounded anew by the height of the tsunami that reached Asahi City at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake (7.6 meters). In the hands-on tour, we watched an archive video, experienced firefighting with a water extinguisher and a wind speed of 30 meters. We also tried calling 119. We also learned how to evacuate from a fire in case of smoke-filled rooms. We were reminded of the terror of natural disasters and the importance of preparation. At the Shonan Michinoeki, where pots of morning glories were lined up and a special melon stand was set up, everyone enjoyed their lunch while appreciating the season.



Firefighting experience

<Request> Make sure to include the event name, your name and phone number when you apply by email. Personal information obtained by the Association will be handled strictly in accordance with the "Act on the Protection of Personal Information." (KIRA)

Date & Time **P**lace **F**ee **N**umber of applicants **L**ecturer **C**ontents **A**pplication **R**eservation.

Kashiwa International Exchange Week 2025 - Many Foreigners Participated (6/23 - 6/28)

The International Exchange Week started under the theme of "Let's Talk with Foreigners and Understand Each Other" and was held for the sixth time this year. With the cooperation of KCC's Japanese language classes, in addition to two universities in the city, a total of 62 foreign nationals attended over those four days (June 24, 25, 26 and 28). The young people from 14 different countries managed to communicate with each other. Their ability ranged from those who spoke no Japanese at all to those who used it almost perfectly in everyday conversation. On Wednesday, June 25, there was a dance performance by the Yosakoi team "Senjin," and most of the participants said they had a great time.



Let's dance Yosakoi!

Although the foreign labor force will become indispensable for the future of Japan, we wonder why foreign nationals do not have much contact with Japanese people in their private lives, and why Japanese people do not take any particular interest in them in their daily lives. We asked them various questions in the hope that, through dialogue, we could learn what they were struggling with and what we could do to help them. One respondent commented, "There are more practical ways of doing things in my workplace, but I don't have the courage to point them out to the Japanese workers who don't want to change." A Malaysian woman said, "I tried to rent a room but was almost always turned down, so it was very difficult." A female student from Myanmar reported on their recent earthquake and appealed, "We still need more support." In addition, there was a comment, "I would like Japanese youth to value their own culture more." We also talked about such topics as food from their home countries and places they would like to visit in Japan, and we made sure to start with greetings to people we did not even know.



Report from a Myanmar student

Refugee Seminar (6/23)

Under the theme of "How to Live Together," the participants discussed with Shuichi Nakao, the lecturer, the problems faced by refugees who have come to Japan.

Those who are designated as refugees receive almost the same level of social services as Japanese people, except that they do not have the right to vote. However, we have learned that they face difficulties in living in Japan, such as "language," "housing," and "work," and that there are barriers that cannot be overcome by their own efforts alone. I feel that the first step toward "living together" is to understand the current situation of these refugees and to think about what we can do for them as concerned citizens.

Multicultural Seminar: A Quarter Century of Accepting International Students (6/27)

Ms. Hideko Kitagaki, Assistant to the President of Kaichi International University, gave a lecture on the very theme of International Exchange Week, "Living Together with Foreign Nationals." Since the university first accepted Chinese students, the number of home countries of the international students has increased to more than 20.

Ms. Kitagaki said there are 8.1 billion people in the world, of which 1.5 billion are English speakers and 140 million are Japanese speakers. These numbers show there are not so many people in the world using Japanese. Therefore, she would like to thank those who have been accepted the challenge of studying such a difficult language as Japanese with hiragana, katakana, kanji, and honorifics. Her gratitude goes one step beyond the mere line, "It must be hard to study Japanese." She also showed us a survey result in which both Japanese and non-Japanese were asked, "What comes to your mind from the word 'Japanese culture?'" The difference of perspective was clear and interesting.



Multicultural Seminar

Mr. Koji Kinutani, a painter, emphasized diversity by saying, "Rich colors are the brightness of life. Society can only shrink if it is dyed one color." Ms. Kitagaki has put Mr. Kinutani's words into practice and speaks from her experience of fostering outstanding, diligent, international students. Her attitude and words have greatly impressed us.

Upcoming Events (From August)

Chengde Youth Visit to Kashiwa (8/5 - 8/9)
Kashiwa Youth Visit to Torrance (8/4 - 8/22)
Kashiwa de International Exchange Festa 2025 (10/19)

Kashiwa Youth Visit to Chengde (8/21 - 8/26)
World Barbecue Party (9/20)



Dispatch to Camden that Broadened My Horizons

2015 Camden Exchange Student – Yuuna Koizumi

Why did you apply for the Camden exchange program?

— My father found a flyer and encouraged me to apply. I became interested in visiting Camden, Kashiwa's sister city.

Was Camden your first overseas experience?

— When I was four, I traveled to Guam for the first time, and since then, I have visited Saipan, South Korea, China, and Indonesia with my family. However, it was my first experience doing a homestay without my parents.

What surprised you in Camden?

— At Camden High School, I was surprised to see students freely sharing boxes of chocolates during class. The atmosphere was very relaxed. One time, a kangaroo jumped out onto the road! Between morning classes, there was a "Brunch Time," and I ate sandwiches my host family had made for me in the courtyard. There was also a separate Lunch Time.

I made Japanese curry rice for my host family, but perhaps because they were not so familiar with Japanese food, they did not seem to enjoy it very much.

What challenges did you face?

— I could not catch spoken English at all—it sounded like magic spells to me. But I managed by using gestures and smiles. I also gave out Japanese snacks and showed them photos from Japan to communicate. From this experience, I realized that language is just one tool of communication, and interpersonal skills are even more important than language ability. I gained weight because I ate lots of sweets such as lamingtons (chocolate cakes covered in coconut), Tim Tams (chocolate-coated biscuits), and Nutella (a hazelnut and cocoa spread).

Although it was summer vacation in Japan, it was winter in Australia. Since there was no bathtub and only a shower, it was cold.

What moved you emotionally?

— I was moved to see sheep shearing up close. The fluffy wool disappeared in an instant. We all held hands to herd the sheep together. Everyone was very friendly. They willingly took photos with me and even tried to speak Japanese.

Do you think your experience in Camden has influenced your life afterwards?

— Yes, definitely.

1. Being exposed to a different culture broadened my perspective. Nowadays, we can see foreign countries through TV or YouTube, but going there is a completely different experience. Japanese common sense often does not apply in other countries.

2. Visiting Camden made me want to go to other countries as well. Even after becoming a working adult, I traveled to Vietnam, Taiwan, and Korea during vacations. I plan to take a solo trip to Thailand this July.

3. I went to Camden during the summer vacation in the 3rd year of junior high school, just before high school entrance exams. I felt my English listening ability improved. The English I could not catch in Camden felt much slower and easier during the entrance exams. My motivation to study English also increased.

4. By speaking about Kashiwa City as a representative of Kashiwa City, I rediscovered its charm. When I became a university student and thought about my future career, I wanted to work in my hometown of Kashiwa. I now work as a staff member for Kashiwa City.

5. I have become less stereotyped and more flexible in my thinking. I believe this mindset has been helpful in my working life.

Message to younger students:

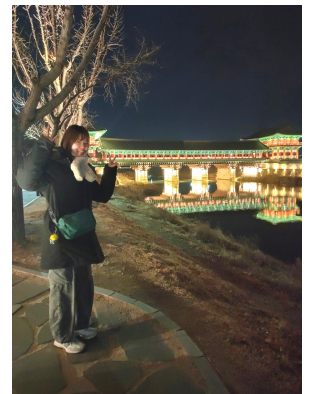
— While you still have time as a student, take on as many challenges as you can.

Discover your strengths and weaknesses. Even failure will serve as a steppingstone to success.

(Interviewed in June by Noriko Fujita)



With a student of the host family in Camden



In Gyeongju, South Korea

Announcement

Online International Exchange Salon

Zoom Tips: Benefits of Breakout Rooms & How to Create Them

D Thursday, August 21, 8:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Ms. Kumiko Yamaguchi (Trainer, ITC-Japan)

How to join: Online (via Zoom) **F** Free

Capacity: First 30 applicants

A Sign up directly at the KCC office or by email boshu-1@kira-kira.jp by August 20 (Wednesday),

Applicants will receive the participation URL on the day of the event.





August Events

Japanese Shonan Classes		
Online Classes		
Sun	10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Minna no Nihongo, Primary II; Chukyu kara Manabu Nihongo Summer Vacation(7/14-9/6)
Sun	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Minna no Nihongo, Primary II Summer Vacation(7/21-9/6)
In-person Classes (Shonan Shakai Fukushima Center)		
Thu	10:00 a.m. - noon	Minna no Nihongo, Primary I(2 classes) Primary II Summer Vacation(7/18-9/3)
Sun	10:00 a.m. - noon	Minna no Nihongo, Primary I(3 classes) Summer Vacation(7/14-9/6)
Japanese Kashiwa/Kashiwanoha Classes Summer Vacation(7/20-9/1)		
Online Classes		
Tue	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 34-)
Wed	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 4-)
Thu	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Conversation Elementary
Fri	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 31-)
In-person Classes (Palette Kashiwa)		
Tue	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hiragana, Katakana; Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 10-/Unit 20-), Minna no Nihongo Primary II (Unit 30-)
Wed	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary & Intermediate
Fri	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 4-)
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Hiragana, Katakana; Minna no Nihongo Primary 1 (Unit 9-/Unit 21-)
In-person Classes (Thu: Kashiwanoha Service Corner, Sat: Kenmin Plaza)		
Thu	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Elementary (first half/second half)
Thu	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Hiragana, Katakana
Sat	10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Conversation Intermediate

Free Legal Advice and Administrative Procedure Support for Foreign Residents

To foreign residents. Are you in need of help? Lawyers and administrative procedure specialists are available for consultation. You can ask for specialists' advice on issues such as family or partner violence, divorce, visa procedures, and problems at work. Reservation necessary

 Wednesday, August 27, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  Palette Kashiwa MTR A  the KCC Office

<Announcements from Other Organizations>



●Members Wanted! Kashiwa International Relations Association (KIRA)

Would you like to join us and take part in international exchange activities? Let's plan and organize various events while interacting with people from different countries! For more details, please visit our website.

Information for Foreign Residents from Kashiwa City

Consultation for Foreign Residents

Available in English (Thu), Chinese (Wed and Fri), Spanish (Mon), and Korean (2nd and 4th Tue) from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Consultation Counter for Foreign Residents (City Hall Main Office Building, 3rd floor).

Tel: 04 - 7168 - 1033

No reservation required.

Email distribution service from Kashiwa City

Sign up to receive email announcement from the city, such as information on natural disasters, crimes, and fires of your area in the language of your choice. Scan the QR code and register!



Multilingual "Koho Kashiwa," monthly official city bulletin

Scan the QR code and select your language under "Foreign Language" to read the official city bulletin, "Koho Kashiwa," selected and translated for foreign residents.



NHK World-JAPAN's website has been renewed. Available in multiple languages.

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/multilingual_links/



Questions?

Please contact the office of
Kashiwa Cross-cultural Center (KCC)

Tel: 04-7157-0281

Fax: 04-7165-7321

Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Closed on Sundays and national holidays