

Mimitaro

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SIA volunteer group “Mimitaro”

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A Commitment to Protect Lives

In this issue, Mimitaro interviewed Mr. Roberto Alba Santiago of Hikone City, the recipient of SIA's Chairman's Award in the “14th Nihongo Speech Contest for Foreigners”



I came to Japan in 2010 through the *Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)* between the Philippines and Japan and is now working for a special nursing home for the elderly in Hikone City. The field of nursing care in Japan which has a manpower shortage, accepts

potential caregivers from the Philippines and the chosen applicants undergo training while working in a nursing care facility. If they could pass the national care worker examination, they may continue to stay in Japan. Since the applicants hardly know anything about caregiving and the Japanese language when they arrive, they have to study hard in preparation for the exam. While working at the same time, I learned Nihongo in local Japanese language classes and the professional knowledge in nursing care from the staff in our facility. Thanks to them, I was able to pass the national examination, and is now on my fourth year as a certified care worker.

I had great interest learning about nursing care because it was full of things I didn't know about, including the unique Japanese culture, and the technical skills required in the field, but learning the language proved to be the most difficult part. There were instances when I was not able to understand the subtle nuances in caregiving terminology unless I actually looked at the gestures. At work, the words and polite terms from the textbooks that I tried using in actual conversations with the residents were incomprehensible to them, and trying to imitate another person's way of talking had resulted in amusing circumstances. Despite such situations, I always try to convey the feeling of friendliness when I communicate to the residents in the facility.

I am often asked if my reason for being in this field is my fondness for old people, but this is not particularly the case. I took this job because I wanted to live in Japan. In the Philippines, working overseas is encouraged by the government because jobs are deficient in the country. Since my father also worked overseas, I grew up listening to his voice in a cassette tape. But thanks to him, I was able to graduate from college and after being employed in a chemical company, I worked as an engineer in Qatar. The idea of coming to Japan dawned on me only after I got married. With the birth of my child, I started to consider Japan as a country where I could live with my family in the future, a peaceful place not so far away from home. It was then that I applied for a job via EPA. It may be hard for a Japanese to understand, but many Filipinos are determined to do anything just to live in a good environment, and job category is just a secondary consideration. I believe that in Japan, I could confidently bring up my children and there is no need for them to leave and work in another country when they become adults so

we could always live together as a family. Right now, they are still in the Philippines, but I am looking forward to the day we could all settle here.

In the special nursing home where I work, residents requiring a high degree of care level such as those bedridden are admitted and they stay here until their last days. The only foreigner among the staff, I look after 50 of these residents and make sure that each one spend a day with delight. Being directly involved with people, caregiving requires 24-hour attendance, regardless of the holidays, and is accomplished by working in teams. For this reason, I try not to be given special attention by the staff around me and do the best I can not to become a burden on them just because I am a foreigner. “*You miss your family, don't you?*” they ask me with concern. Still, I limit my vacation to once a year, just like everyone else. We all want a day of rest from this severely busy workplace that is physically and mentally exhausting. I wouldn't want to take advantage of my being a foreigner to get special treatment. Besides, I would like to work here for as long as I can, so in the long run, it is I, who would personally benefit from valuing my relationship with my colleagues. Another matter that concerns me for being a foreigner, are the families who occasionally come to visit the facility. The residents and their families who I often deal with everyday are already used to my presence, but I am worried that those who I rarely come in contact with may feel uneasy, suddenly having to deal with a non-Japanese staff, speaking to them in non-native Japanese. In such a situation, I ask a Japanese coworker to take my place.

Without expert knowledge, nursing care may to some extent be difficult, involving duties such as caring for people with senile dementia and those who are bedridden. Even so, pleasant communication takes place because it is a job that deals directly with another human being. In this respect, the caregiver's attitude may also be called into question. So even if I feel a bit tired at times, I always try to go to work in a good mood, and then I find a lot of pleasure in the little things in daily life. Just to see the elderly enjoy listening to stories about foreign countries, having them remember, or simply calling out my name, gives me a feeling of joy. This is probably the source of my strength at work.

The nursing care technical internship program is about to start this year and our facility is preparing to accept foreign caregivers. Having been involved in this field for 8 years has become my wealth, learning not only the techniques, but various things such as the Japanese culture and way of thinking. I believe it is my mission to convey my experience to the new batch of caregivers. I will assist them so as not to become a burden to the Japanese staff and make them understand that a caregiver's job is indispensable because lives are at stake, and that as a team, we will protect the precious lives of the residents in our facility.

When in trouble. . .

Interpretation * Consultation Desks for Foreign Residents in Shiga



Area	Consultation Desk	Language(s)	Consultation Schedule	Contact Info.
Otsu	City Hall Tourism Promotion Div. Inbound Int'l. Relations & Affairs Off.	Portuguese, Spanish, English, Chinese, etc.	Mon~Fri 8:40~17:25	email: otsu1616@city.otsu.lg.jp FAX: 077-523-4053
	Otsu Int'l. Goodwill Association (Otsu-shi Kokusai Shinzen Kyokai)	Japanese (interpreter required)	2nd Wed 17:30~19:30 (by appointment)	077-525-4711
Hikone	Hikone Station West entrance Provisional Gov't. bldg. 3rd flr. Information Center	Portuguese	1st ~ 3rd Thu 8:30~19:00 Mon~Fri (except for the above)	0749-30-6113
		English	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:15	
		Chinese	Tue, Fri 8:30~17:15	
Nagahama	City hall (Shimin-ka)	Portuguese	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:15	0749-65-8711
		Spanish	Mon, Tue, Fri 8:30~15:30	
		English	Tue, Wed, Fri 8:30~15:30	
	Nagahama Int'l. Friendship Assn. (Nagahama Shimin Kokusai Koryu Kyokai)	Portuguese	Wed 10:00~17:00 Sat 13:00~17:00	0749-63-4400
Omihachiman	City hall (individual department)	Portuguese, English	Mon~Fri 9:00~16:45	0748-26-7092
Kusatsu	City hall (Machizukuri Kyodo-ka)	English	Mon~Fri 9:00~16:00	077-561-2337
Moriyama	Moriyama Int'l. Friendship Assn. (Moriyama Shimin Koryu Center)	English (Appointment needed for languages other than English)	Mon~Fri 9:00~16:30	077-583-4653
Ritto	Ritto Int'l. Friendship Association (Ritto Kokusai Koryu Kyokai)	Portuguese	Wed 13:00~17:00	077-551-0293
Koka	City hall (Seikatsu Kankyo-ka)	Portuguese, Spanish	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:15	0748-69-2146
	(Shakai Fukushi-ka)	Portuguese		0748-69-2155
	(Kosodate seisaku-ka)	Portuguese, Spanish		0748-69-2176
	Chiiki Community Suishin-ka	English		0748-69-2114
Yasu	Yasu International Association (Yasu-shi Kokusai Kyokai)	English, Spanish	Mon~Fri 9:00~17:00	077-586-3106
		Portuguese, Chinese	Irregular sched. (by appointment)	
Konan	Higashi Chosha	Portuguese	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:15	0748-72-1290
	Nishi Chosha (Jinken Yougo-ka)	Portuguese		0748-77-8511
	Konan International Association (Konan-shi Kokusai Kyokai)	Portuguese	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:00	0748-71-4332
Takashima	Takashima International Assn. (Takashima-shi Kokusai Kyokai)	English	Irregular sched. (by appointment)	0740-20-1180
Higashiomi	City hall (Shinkan) Shimin Seikatsu Sodan-shitsu	Portuguese	Mon~Fri 9:00~12:00 13:00~16:30	0748-24-5521
Maibara	Santo Chosha Santo Ibuki Chiiki Kyoudou-ka	Portuguese	Mon~Fri 8:30~17:15	0749-55-2650
	Maibara Multicultural Friendship Assn. (Maibara-shi Tabunka Kyosei Kyokai)	Portuguese	Tue~Fri 13:15~17:15	0749-56-0577
		Chinese	Mon~Thu 9:00~15:00	
Hino	Town office (Jumin-ka)	Portuguese	Mon, Wed, Thu 8:30~17:15	0748-52-6571
Aisho	Echigawa Chosha Jumin-ka · Sogo seisaku-ka	Portuguese	Mon~Thu 8:30~17:15	0749-42-7684
		Spanish, English	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 8:30~17:15	
Shiga Pref.	Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization (Shiga-ken Kokusai Kyokai)	Portuguese, Spanish	Mon~Fri 10:00~17:00	077-523-5646
		Tagalog, English	Mon~Thu 10:00~17:00	



Japanese Language Classes in Shiga



Area	Group Name	Contact info.	Class Schedule	Venue
Otsu	Otsu Int'l. Goodwill Association Nihongo kyoshitsu	077-525-4711	Fri 13:00~14:45, 19:00~20:45	Asuto Hamaotsu 2F
			Fri 19:00~20:45	Seta Shimin Center
			Fri 19:00~20:45	Seta-higashi Shimin Center
			Thu 10:00~11:45	Katata Shimin Center
	Nihongo no kai	090-6609-3191	Thu 10:00~12:00	Otsu Komin-kan
	Omi Nihongo Fureai Club	077-523-1061	Mon 10:30~12:00	Piazza Ohmi 2F
			Sat 19:30~21:10	Seta-kita Komin-kan
Hikone	Hikone International Assn. Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0749-22-5931	Wed 19:00~20:30 (Mar~ Nov)	Hikone Shimin Kai-kan 2F
	Hikone Nihongo Kyoshi-kai WAGT	0749-23-7833	2nd Sat 10:00~12:00	AI Plaza Hikone 6F
	Nihongo Kyoshitsu Smile	0749-24-7241	Sun 10:00~11:30	Hikone Nishi-chiku Komin-kan
		070-5661-7345	Mon~Fri ① 9:30~10:50 ② 10:00~12:20 ③ 13:30~14:50 ④ 15:00~16:20 (closed on Tue.)	Innovation Office Nayashichi
Nagahama	Hikone Kokusai Koryukai VOICE Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0749-23-3018 090-5156-6916	Sat 14:00~16:00	Hikone Naka-chiku Komin-kan
	Nagahama UNESCO Kyokai Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0749-65-6552	Wed, Sat 19:00~20:30	Kokusai Bunka Koryu House GEO
	Tanoshii Nihongo	0749-63-4400	Tue 19:00~20:30 1st & 3rd Sat 10:00~11:30	
Omi-hachiman	Nihongo Koryu Kyoshitsu <i>Tampopo</i>	0748-26-7092	Sat 19:00~21:00	Kaneda Community Center
	Kaneda Kyoshitsu			Azuchi Community Center
	Azuchi Kyoshitsu		Thu 19:00~21:00	Former Hachiman Educ. Assembly Hall
Camiyando OH				
Kusatsu	Olive	077-565-9215	Sat 19:00~20:40	Kusatsu-shirtsu Machizukuri Center
	SHIPS Nihongo Kyoshitsu	077-561-5110	Wed, Fri 10:30~12:00	Tabunka Kyosei Shien Center
	Kusatsu International Friendship Association Nihongo Kyoshitsu <i>Kizuna</i>	077-561-2322	Sat 10:20~12:00	Ritsumeikan Univ. BKC
Moriyama	Moriyama Nihongo Kyoshitsu	077-583-4653	1st & 3rd Sat 10:00~11:50	Moriyama Shimin Koryu Center
Ritto	RIFA Nihongo Kyoshitsu	077-551-0293	2nd & 4th Sat 10:15~11:45	Wing Plaza 3F
Koka	Koka International Exchange Assn.	0748-63-8728	Sat 19:30~21:30	Minakuchi Chuo Komin-kan
			Mon 14:00~16:00	Jishu Katsudo Center Kizuna
Yasu	YIFA Nihongo Kyoshitsu	077-586-3106	* Sched. can be arranged	Yasu Int'l. Association (office)
Konan	Konan International Association Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0748-71-4332	Mon~Fri 10:00~11:30 14:00~15:30	Chuo Machizukuri Center
			Sat 19:00~20:30	Mito Machizukuri Center
	Camiyando	090-1448-3350	Mon, Wed 19:00~21:00	ERUDI
Takashima	Takashima International Assn. Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0740-20-1180	* Sched. can be arranged	
Higashiomi	Yokaichi Nihongo Kyoshitsu Volunteer Group	0748-22-6714	1st, 2nd, 3rd Sun 13:30~15:00	Higashiomi International Friendship Association
			Tue 10:00~11:30	
			Sat 19:00~20:30	
Maibara	Maibara-shi Nihongo Kyoshitsu	0749-56-0577	Sat 9:00~10:30	Maibara Komin-kan
			Sat 9:30~11:00	Maibara Shimin Koryu Plaza, Santo Komin-kan
Aisho	Aisho Int'l. Friendship Assn. Volunteer Nihongo Kyoshitsu	070-5593-1769	Tue~Sun * Sched. can be arranged	Echigawa Komin-kan

Event Information

◆ **Shigaraki Fire Festival** 7/28 (Sat)
Shingu Shrine to Shigaraki Shimin Center
(Nagano, Shigaraki-cho, Koka City)

A thanksgiving festival to fire. About 700 torches line up the road
[INQ] Touto • Shigaraki Festival Executive Committee
Fire Festival Secretariat Tel. 0748-82-0873

◆ **Birdman Rally** 7/28 (Sat), 7/29 (Sun)
(Matsubara Beach, Hikone City)

Originally contrived man-powered aircrafts compete for flight distance in this tournament
[INQ] Hikone Sightseeing Association Tel. 0749-23-0001

◆ **Makino Summer Carnival 2018** 8/4 (Sat)
Makino Sunny Beach Takagi-hama
(Makino-cho, Takashima City)

There will be stage shows and fireworks display
[INQ] Makino Tourism office Tel. 0740-28-8002

◆ **Senkousai Festival** 8/17 (Fri)
Takebe-taisha • In the vicinity of Seta's Karahashi Bridge
(1-16-1 Jinryo, Otsu City)

A festival in summer where boats carrying portable shrines sail across the Seta River; fireworks display
[INQ] Takebe-taisha (shrine) Tel. 077-545-0038

◆ **Injyo-ji Manto Kuyo (memorial service)** 8/22 (Wed)
(3-12 Kamiyama-cho, Higashiomi City)

About 5,000 Buddhist stone images will be lit up; bazaar
[INQ] Injyo-ji (temple) Tel. 0749-46-1285

◆ **Illumination of torii (gateway to a shrine) on the lake**
9/5 (Wed) from sunset until 10 pm
Sat • Sun (2 hours after sunset)



Shirahige Jinja
(215 Ukawa Takashima City)
[INQ] Shirahige Jinja (shrine) Tel. 0740-36-1555

◆ **International Arts Festival Biwako Biennale 2018**
9/15 (Sat) until 11/11 (Sun) (Former town of Omihachiman)

An exhibition of works of national and international contemporary artists; concerts
Passport fee: General - ¥2,200 Students - ¥1,500
[INQ] NPO Energy Field Tel. 0748-36-3766

◆ **Illumination of Shrines** 9/29 (Sat) to 11/30 (Fri)
Taga Temple illumination - from sunset until 9:00 pm

- Taga-taisha (604 Taga, Taga-cho)
(9/24 Moon-viewing Festival)
- Kogen-ji (374 Narasaki, Taga-cho)
- Otaki-jinja (Tomi no O, Taga-cho)
- Konomiya-jinja (49 Binman-ji, Taga-cho)

[INQ] Taga Sightseeing Association
Tel. 0749-48-1553



**The next issue of Mimitaro will be in October.
Don't miss it!**

★★★ Fireworks Display ★★★



◆ **Nagahama • North Biwako Fireworks Display**
7/27 (Fri) Nagahama Harbor

[INQ] Nagahama Tourism Promotion section
Tel. 0749-65-6521

◆ **Hikone • North Biwako Fireworks Display**
8/1 (Wed) Matsubara Beach

[INQ] Hikone Sightseeing Association Tel. 0749-23-0001

◆ **Biwako Fireworks Display**
8/7 (Tue) Otsu Port

[INQ] Biwako Fireworks Display Exec. Committee
Tel. 077-511-1530

★★★ SIA Information ★★★

★ **"Career Fair" for Students with Foreign Roots** ★

An event on career guidance for admission to senior high school where students can directly talk to various professional guests

Date/Time: 7/22 (Sun) 12:30~16:30

Venue: "G-NET Shiga" (80-4 Takakai-cho, Omihachiman City)

Participants: Students with foreign roots (from elem. 5th graders to senior high school students) and their parents, etc.

No participation fee. There will be interpreters present.

Number of participants: approximately 80 persons

[INQ] • Application Until 7/18 (Wed)

Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization (SIA)

(Contact Ms. Omori)

e-mail: omori@s-i-a.or.jp

Tel. 077-526-0931

Fax 077-510-0601

★ **Test for Lower Secondary School Graduation Certificate** ★

(chugakko sotsugyo teido nintei shiken)

Application period: 8/20 (Mon) until 9/7 (Fri)

Date of exam: 10/25 (Thu)

[INQ] Shiga Pref. Board of Education Secretariat

Pre-school, Elem. and Jr. High School Division

Tel. 077-528-4660

★ **(2nd) Certificate for Achieving the Proficiency Level of Upper Secondary School Graduates** ★

(kotogakko sotsugyo teido nintei shiken)

Application period: 8/30 (Thu) until 9/13 (Thu)

Date of exam: 11/10 (Sat) & 11/11 (Sun)

[INQ] Shiga Pref. Board of Education Secretariat

Senior High School Division

Tel. 077-528-4573

★ **Training for Foreign Caregivers** ★

Date/Time: Saturdays and Sundays, 9:30~16:30

from 9/1 (Sat) to 12/22 (Sat)

Venue: Machikado Care Shiga Net

(2-1-36 Ishibe-higashi, Konan City)

Contents: Initial training for caregivers

(A certificate will be issued upon course completion)

Participants: 20 foreign residents of Shiga prefecture

Tuition fee: Free of charge

(Textbook worth ¥8,500 will be shouldered by the participant)

■ Scheduled to be held in Nagahama City at a later date.

[INQ] Machikado Care Shiga Net

Tel. 0748-60-2899

(An organization entrusted by the prefecture)