

Hi!

from

Autumn 2021 vol 9

SAGA

Provided by

SUISA Newsletter Team
& Center for Promotion of International Exchange, Saga University



Introducing Saga University Global Supporter

We plan, manage, and facilitate international exchange events at the university.



Kashima Trip Program

Connecting Kashima's attractiveness to inbound tourism.



Buddy Program

A pair of foreign student with Japanese student to get to know each other custom.



Covid Vaccination in Campus

Saga University uses Moderna vaccine manufactured by Takeda.



Halloween Party

"Ohh... The email came from International Office is a Halloween Party invitation!"



Program for Promoting International Work in Local Areas (PILWo)

In order to guide foreign students through the job-hunting process.

Center for Promotion
of International Exchange, Saga University

+81-952-28-8169



ryugaku@mail.admin.saga-u.ac.jp



<https://www.irdc.saga-u.ac.jp>



Saga University Global Supporter

What is Global Supporter?

In collaboration with Center for Promotion of International Exchange Saga University, we plan, manage, and facilitate international exchange events at the university. We also provide support for international students and those who wish to study abroad.



Logo of Saga University Global Supporter

When GS started?

We interviewed applicants in April 2021. It is a very young organization that has been for less than a year.

Who are the members?

A total of 15 students, 13 Japanese students and 2 international students, are active and they are in various grades from various faculties. We are mainly active in a group of students who have experienced exchange study abroad called SIPS.

What are the goals of GS?

Our goal is to revitalize international exchange at Saga University! Since the spread of the COVID-19, various events and exchange programs have been cancelled. While it is difficult to study abroad, we always think about what we can do and hold events.

What are the activities made by GS so far?

We hold monthly online and face-to-face Meetup events. In July, we held a large-scale event of one week as International Week. In October, we also hold Halloween events and provide events that students can enjoy as much as possible.

How do you feel as a part of GS?

As a member of GS, I find it very rewarding to plan, manage and facilitate various activities. There are many difficult points, but I feel that we are able to create better products by cooperating with other members. I also feel that this is a great opportunity to improve my English skills.

Any message to Saga University students?

When you hear about international exchange, you may have an image that it is often difficult, such as having to speak English. We want such students to have fun international exchanges and create new encounters. If you are interested in it, or if you are wondering whether to attend the event, please join us! I am looking forward to seeing you at events.

Kashima Trip Program

"Connecting Kashima's attractiveness to inbound tourism" which is "Kashima's video clip/ poster design project" was organized under the guidance of Associate Professor, Ishimatsu Hiroyuki from Center for Promotion of International Exchange, Saga University. Many international and Japanese students participated in this program.



The main part of the program was in Kashima City, however, all the participants had pre-training and post-training periods. To figure out more details about the program, I interviewed one of the participants. Her name is "PRECIOUS KARONGA" and she is from Zimbabwe. She is a bachelor's student studying Biochemistry from the faculty of Agriculture, Saga University.

Where was the field trip and how long?

The trip was to Kashima City and it was a two-day one night trip.

What is the purpose of the trip?

The purpose of the trip was to promote Kashima city and also to get to know the city from local people's point of view.

How do you feel about the pre-training?

Pre-training was very helpful because it gave me an idea of what I was going to see and experience in Kashima.

What did you do during the trip, as a group and individual?

We did various interesting things. My highlight of the trip was getting to attend a traditional ceremony in the Yutoku Inari Shrine and after that, we got to drink traditionally made green tea, made from special ingredients, it was delicious with a rich taste. We also went to one of the oldest sake breweries to see how they do their work. Then we walked around hamashuku street, which is said to have been a famous trading point back in the days. We also visited Kashima Mud flood tidal where the famous Gatalympic takes place. We had an opportunity to taste locally made sake and a range of wines.

Do you want to share some funny moments with us?

Yes, I had fun during one of the pre-training meetings when we had to build a marshmallow tower. Unfortunately, my group's tower could not stand on its own at the end. And also, in the pickle-making process, we did in Kashima I hope my pickles will taste great after the 2 months incubation period because I had no idea what I was doing.



A Group Picture of Kashima Trip

What did you get from this program?

I think I improved in teamwork because almost everything we did before, during, and after the trip was groupwork-based. As well as time management, we kept all activities according to the schedule. Moreover, I've got lots of friends...

What are the post-program activities?

After the trip we have to make a poster and a video about Kashima, trying to promote Kashima Region to inbound foreign and local tourists as a destination of choice in Saga.

How do you think of Kashima Region?

I think Kashima City is under-rated. I feel like there was more to see and experience there and my 2 days trip could not allow me to explore further. I will definitely go back there sometime.

Buddy Program

As we have reported that due to COVID-19 pandemic, the exchange students which planned to come to Japan during 2020-2021, unfortunately, have to switch their plan to participate the program online. However, as we fully know that exchange program is not only about learning language, but cultural exchange is also the important part of it. To have the foreign students and Japanese students experience diverse culture as the program intended as much as possible, the Center for Promotion of International Exchange came up with the Buddy system which would pair foreign students with Japanese students to get to know each other custom. Today we got a chance to interview Lita-san and Samadhi-san who participate in the Online Exchange Program.



Lita from Cambodia and Samadhi from Sri Lanka

Can you please introduce yourself?

Lita : I am Kry Lita from Cambodia.

Samadhi: I am Samadhi Dissanayake from Sri Lanka.

I am sorry for making this the first question. Can you please tell me how COVID-19 pandemic have affect your plan to come to Saga?

Lita : I planned to join the SPACE-E program in April 2020. But, two or three days before my flight to Japan, the flight was suddenly cancelled, so I can say that it happened suddenly. There were many students who resign from participating the program. However, I did not. I decided to delay my exchange program to the next semester in October, but when the time comes, the situation did not get better, and it seems like the program was

going to be cancelled. In February the situation did not ease up, and the Center for Promotion of International Exchange asked me if I am interested in the online exchange program.

Samadhi : Like Lita, I applied for an exchange program in 2020 and I waited for one year until 2021 when the online program started. We get to select 6 subjects that we would like to study. I chose Japanese language with an independent study and a subject in economic.

Wow so it took about one year until the online course started. Anyway let's move to our main topic. Could you please tell us about the Buddy system?

Lita : The buddy program was coming up by the Center for Promotion of International Exchange. The program will pair international students with Japanese student to talk about various things from daily life to study for us to get to know each other better.

How were you assigned to your buddy? Do you get to choose, or the pairs were selected randomly?

Samadhi : We were assigned a Japanese buddy at the beginning of the semester. the Center for Promotion of International Exchange selected one Japanese buddy for us among the three choices we chose.

Lita : We got a listed of possible buddy with their hobbies, their field of study, their year of study and other information without their name. Then choose the buddy into 3 ranks and the Center for Promotion of International Exchange would choose the buddy for us.

So, when did you start to talk with your buddy and is there an official first day where you get to meet your buddy?

Lita : After they selected the buddy for us, they send us the contact information like their e-mail to us. Then we exchange our SNS account. The Center for Promotion of International Exchange also set up an official meeting for us online by video call which was the orientation day. But we already talked through SNS by then.

Samadhi : After we were assigned our buddy, first we contacted each other through e-mail, then we decided to contact each other through SNS like Line and WhatsApp.

What are the activities the Center for Promotion of International Exchange held for you guys to get to know each other better?

Lita : Apart from arranging video calls, they also held other activities for us to participate together like the language lounge. At the beginning we would receive a list of activities that we can participate. There are also activities suggestion like a topic for discussion, language teaching, drama to watch and video game to play together.

Samadhi : We introduce each other our families, our university, and the location we want to show each other. I place I introduce to her is the Royal Botanic Gardens. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic I did not show her the real place but a photograph instead. My buddy showed me Saga University, Fukuoka Station, and a museum in Fukuoka. There was also a report that we must submit. At the end of the semester about the activities we had done together. We decided to give a presentation about our interest, our culture, our hometown, and our university.

What do you think are the differences and similarities between you and your buddy?

Samadhi : We both study agriculture and we both love pets. I keep a dog at home, and she has two hamsters.

Are there any communication difficulties?

Lita : Yes, since both of us are not native English speaker, when we made a video call sometimes it is difficult for us to understand each other. We would text each other instead if that happened. Sometimes communicating through SNS leads to late contact in urgent time. There was this one time when my buddy invites me to some event before the day it was held, and I did not reply her soon enough to participate in the event.

Lastly, please tell me about any story you were impressed by your buddy the most.

Lita: In one of activity that we need to show our hometown. She opened her camera and walk around while showing me around her house, the bus stop, the road and the transportation system. Even though the weather was very hot, but she walked around for 2 hours until she reached the sightseeing spot. When she reached the sightseeing spot, the connection was very bad, so she tried taking the pictures of the sightseeing spot to show me instead. I was very impressed in the effort she gave. We also talked a lot about her story during the walk. Sadly, the COVID-19 situation in Cambodia was very bad so I could not show her my hometown.

Samadhi : My buddy was very helpful. She helps me with learning Japanese language. She also helped check my answer when I practiced doing Japanese drills.

Even after the Online Exchange Program, did you guys still get in touch?

Lita: Yes, we sometimes still talked through SNS, but not quite often since we are both very busy after graduation. But every special occasion like her birthday I always remember to wish her a happy birthday.

Thank you very much for sharing us your experience and I hope you to be successful in your career path.

Lita/Samadhi : Thank you for the interview too.

notice regarding the vaccination process, they provided it very well. On the day of vaccination, I needed to bring a paper stating I am ready to be vaccinated as well as my information on that day such as body temperature and whether I have allergies. Next, the staff will check and state whether I can get vaccinated. After doing the vaccination I gave a vaccination coupon and got a vaccination certificate, the staff gave me a leaflet for the second vaccination which is a month after the first vaccination along with the password for the second vaccination registration. The staff provided a waiting area after vaccination to see the side effects of vaccination. I noticed several people had different side effects and the staff took good care of them. I think Saga University has managed the schedule and the number of participants well so that during the process I didn't have to wait for long time.



The effect I felt after the first vaccination was soreness in the injected hand, a little difficult to move it for the whole day, but after that everything was fine. After the second vaccination I had a fever for two days.

A vaccination is our responsibility to prevent the spread of covid. By vaccinating, it means we are helping to suppress the spread of Covid. Vaccination is important to protect yourself and others.

Halloween Party

Covid Vaccination in Campus



My name is Fathia Lovita Farasi from Indonesia. I am now in my second-year master student of Chemical Engineering at Saga University.

I took my first vaccination on August 11th and the second one on 8th September 2021 in Saga University. Saga University uses Moderna vaccine manufactured by Takeda,

and it says that the onset prevention effect is about 94%. There were also vaccinations in hospital, but I decided to take the vaccine on campus because Saga University is close to where I live. Besides that, the registration procedure was also easy and could be done online. At that time, the vaccination from Saga University was postponed which made me and my friends tried to register at one of the hospitals, but the vaccination queue was so long, and we were only able to get the first vaccination on September. Luckily the vaccination at Saga University can be done on August and I got the vaccination there.

The campus made vaccination notification includes a web address to register if I want to do it. I needed to fill my personal data and chose the available date that matches with my schedule, I could also choose several dates. After that I read the

It was one fine evening of autumn days, and I received an email from International Division Saga University.

"Ohh... it's about Halloween!".

I was so surprised because, as far as I know, Halloween is famous in western countries, not in Asia. The party was on 29th October, Friday night. However, I was so excited and curious about this even since I've never celebrated Halloween Party before. As soon as I got the mail, I registered for that event because it's mentioned that only 30 people will be allowed to participate to prevent the covid situation.

After registration, it was time to think about the costume because the event was coming soon. Since Japan is a country famous for cosplay, I found out that they'd like to do cosplay on Halloween too. Moreover, the weather was getting colder day by day, I preferred the costume that can give me enough protection from the cozy autumn breeze. After a long consideration for a few days, I decided to order a princess costume from Amazon.

"Ahh.... the shipping days are too long!! It cannot be delivered on time".

I gave up and I just selected my second option. Here, I want to suggest to the readers to order the costume as early as possible. Anyway, ...

"I'd become a witch!"

It was Friday evening ... getting dark outside... I finished dressing up and I am ready to go to the Halloween event. When I entered the event room, I saw a group of students was wearing Hogwarts uniforms. I felt like I am in a magic world, and it reminded me about my childhood dream of "attending Hogwarts School with Harry Potter".



Hogwarts Students

I saw people dressing up like a princess, spiderman, doctor plague, witch, skull body, demons, and the squid game characters. When we hear "Halloween", we think of buying a costume". But I also noticed some students created a costume with things we already have (DIY) such as wearing a lab coat, gloves and mask turned out to be a scientist.

While looking around, I noticed someone blocking my way... I saw a person with blinking sunglasses and fake hair... He was playing the role of a guitarist! I tried to go in another direction. He blocked again. I was so confused for a few seconds looking at him unintelligibly. I didn't have any clue. Then he started laughing and right after that my brain cells started working

"Ohh that's my friend" ... and we couldn't stop laughing for a while.

After trying to recognize the participants, the organizers set up our own team and we played a Halloween game. The mission of the game was "taking Halloween theme photos at the targeted areas". We've got the list of targeted areas and lists of photo styles we are supposed to do. We altogether participated in the game, and it was so much fun.



Halloween Pose in front of Saga University Stone

After that, we had a special moment. It was "the best costume award". We all had to vote for our favourite costume. It was such a difficult moment for me because I do love all the costumes. As a result, the costume of "Goku" from Dragon Ball anime won the 1st prize and the "doctor plague" got the second prize.

Overall, it was an awesome experience, and I will never forget my very first "Happy Halloween" event at Saga University with my beloved friends.

Program for Promoting International Work in Local Areas (PILWo)

I trusted that a lot of foreign students who are studying in Saga University wishes to find a job in Japan. However, most of the foreign students did not know the job-hunting process in Japan even the students who speaks Japanese well. In order to guide foreign students through this job-hunting process the "Program for Promoting International Work in Local Areas (PILWo)" was established. Today we have a great honor to interview Professor Koga Hiroki who is now supervising this program. Saga University's Office of International affairs is the main organizer of this program and it is supported by Saga prefecture.

First, I would like to ask when did this program started?

It has just started in October this year (2021). So, it is still a new program.

If it just started are there already a student participating in this program?

Yes, there are already 6 people in this program who are mostly graduate students since it is a program with the objective of mainly supporting master and Ph.D. students.

For example, if I would like to start a job in Japan, when should I start considering about job hunting?

Mostly you should start finding jobs 2 years before entering the firm. So simply speaking, if possible you should start from your first semester of the master program, if not, I would recommend you to at least start it in the second semester.

Wow, that's very early. When does this program start accepting applicants?

Our program will start accepting application on July-September every year and the program would start from October. Moreover, four of the applied students would be awarded a scholarship from the Saga prefecture.

What is the qualification needed in order to apply for this program?

At least your Japanese skill, especially conversation skill, should be equivalent to JLPT N2 level. This is because it is the qualification required by most company in Saga. The selection would be done by the program supervisor.

I was wondering what kind of qualification the firm in Saga were seeking for from international students.

I think they are seeking for the student who can work in a position that Japanese people can't. For example, master and Ph.D student who have extensive knowledge in certain engineering and scientific field. Also, students who are fluent in multiple languages who can work as an interpreter or foreign relations officer are needed.

When will I know the result whether I got accepted?

Mostly you will know the results about the first semester of your 2nd year in the master course or Ph.D course. Even if you did not find any job at that time you still have a chance until December of your 2nd year.

Lastly is there anything you would like to advice the student who are planning to find job in Japan?

After you graduated your work would be entirely in Japanese. Whether it is reading documents full of Kanji or speaking with superior or co-worker. So, I would like to advise you to learn Japanese as much as you can and try to aim for JLPT N1.

Thank you very much for your precious time and valuable insight. I hope that every student in the program would find the job they want.

Thanks for the interview too.

Edited by

Peemaphat Buarapha, 2nd Year PhD Student of Science and Engineering

Myat Htoo San, 2nd Year Master Student of Advanced Health Science

Takayuki Kunihiro, 4th Year Student of Secondary English Education

Jevri Tri Ardiansah, 1st Year PhD Student of Computer Science

