

Hoping to Contribute to Iran by Studying Earthquake Resistance Technology

Afzali, Hamid

Doctoral Course in Architectural and Civil Engineering, Graduate School of Science and Technology

Mr. Afzali Hamid, from Iran, researches earthquakes and earthquake resistant construction.

He says that in the future, he hopes to contribute to the society through constructing earthquake-resistant buildings and bridges.



"My favorite place in Kumamoto is Lake Ezu," Mr. Afzali says. He made a presentation about Lake Ezu in Japanese for a program hosted by the Kumamoto International Foundation. (Mr. Afzali is in the center)

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I Want to Study the Kyushu Dialect and Young People's Speech and Get to Know the Current Japan!

Phung, Nguyet Thi

Master's Course in Cultural Sciences, Graduate School of Social and Cultural Sciences

Ms. Phung Nguyet Thi came from Vietnam to Kumamoto last October with a goal of becoming a teacher of Japanese.

She says she wants to study the language of young people and the dialect for a deeper understanding of Japan.



Ms. Phung says the people around her are very kind, which she really appreciates. "Unfortunately, people talk to me very politely when I want to hear more casual words from young people, since that is my research theme!"

■ A lot of things to be learned from the risk management in Japan

"I am greatly impressed by Japan's ability to recover after the Great East Japan Earthquake," says Afzali. Japan is a country that experiences earthquakes more often than many other countries. As his childhood dream was to become a researcher of earthquakes, he studied civil engineering and structural mechanics at university and graduate school in Iran, and then came to Japan to study at Kumamoto University. "If an earthquake of the same scale hits Japan and Iran, the aftermath damage would be by far greater in Iran. I hope I can contribute to disaster prevention in Iran after studying advanced structural mechanics here at Kumamoto University," says Afzali, expressing his initial motivation to come here to study. Moreover, Afzali also has great interest in the crisis management capabilities and the morality of the Japanese. "In Japan, I have learned not only the technology of earthquake resistance, but also preparation for emergencies, the teamwork seen at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the attitude when facing difficulties and more."

■ Wishing to convey Japan's high quality culture to the people in my home country

At the laboratory, Afzali engages in research with his friends, including students from countries such as Indonesia and Turkey. "Our research is driven by cross-border teamwork," says Afzali. He appreciates the many people in town who kindly talk to him. "When I go to a department store, the staff gives me a very respectful bow, and kindly takes me to where I can find the items

I want. I think the key to Japan's economic development should be attributed not just to high technology, but also to the spirit of respect towards each customer which underlies all business activities."

Afzali will study in Kumamoto University until October 2014. "I want to engage in projects related to earthquake resistance and activities to share Japan's culture in Iran, based on what I have learned in my experience here at Kumamoto University," he says enthusiastically.



Mr. Afzali is currently studying Japanese. He hopes to learn the local dialect to achieve more meaningful communication.

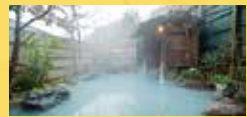
Excerpted from "Kumadai Tsushin" Vol. 44, 2012 Spring

熊本散歩

A Walk In Kumamoto information of Kumamoto

Hot Springs

Fiery Mt. Aso is the source of the natural hot springs that dot the prefecture and make Kumamoto a premier "hot spring kingdom" within Japan. Each hot spring is able to boast water with unique mineral properties. Surrounded by lush landscapes of ocean, mountains, and rivers, Kumamoto's hot springs also offer scenery in endless variety.



■ I came to Kumamoto University to study "Kyushu Dialect"

"Since my childhood, I have loved Japanese comics and TV shows. I was very impressed by the strong mentality of Oshin, the protagonist in a famous TV show, which motivated me to study the Japanese culture. I studied for one year at Osaka University as an exchange student when I was a student at the Department of Japanese Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi. My wish to study again in Japan grew, and I came to Kumamoto University after I graduated from university."

"I chose Kumamoto University because I wanted to study the dialect of Kyushu. My professor specializes in Kyushu dialect here at Kumamoto University. I contacted him from Vietnam and told him that I wanted to study the Kyushu dialect. Now I am studying about the cultures of not only Japan but other countries in East Asia from various perspectives. My favorite part of Kumamoto dialect is the expression *sekarashika* and the sound of *ken*, which locals add to the end of sentences. It is my dream to master the dialect by the time I leave Kumamoto."

■ Wanting to be a Japanese language teacher who can tell people various aspects of Japan

"I am also studying the language of young Japanese. The language of young people contains many abbreviated words. It may be convenient, but at the same time could ruin the beauty of the language, which has a very long history. Some words go in and out of fashion, and others become established in the Japanese vocabulary. I want to study about those words from various

perspectives and consider the cultural values and the language sensitivity of the Japanese. An increasing number of young Vietnamese, who are influenced by Japanese cartoons and animations, are now interested in Japanese culture. In the future, I want to become a Japanese language teacher who can convey various aspects of culture and thoughts of Japan based on what I have studied at Kumamoto University."



In February this year, a group of international students of Kumamoto University made a trip to the Unzen and Shimabara area. "We spent some time there learning about the history of Shimabara Castle and Mt. Fugen. I am really happy to have become friends with many students from other countries."

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