



MINATO

みなとユネスコ 会報

Bulletin

MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

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To elderly people who have survived the turbulent Showa Era Let me express my gratitude and congratulations

UTSUNOMIYA Kazumi, Director of MUA



This year, a woman in her 40s got elected as a new Minato City mayor. She has put up new slogans such as child-care support and others. I felt a new wind blowing in our community where smartly dressed gentlemen used to talk about campaign promises.

Every year in October, Minato City Social Welfare Council holds a “Longevity Celebration Party” at Tokyo Prince Hotel, inviting a number of Minato Council members and Minato citizens who are over 76 years old. Among these elderly residents, I hear that nearly 300 are age 100 or older. Isn’t this amazing? This may be attributable to well-equipped medical service, family members’ love and fulfilling care extended by Minato City.

Looking back the years gone by, I still remember the moment the white doves were released into the blue sky as we celebrated the opening of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. Meanwhile, Tokyo Tower, which was painted orange and served as a symbol of Minato City, has changed its color over time and marked its 60th milestone. My father established a machinery production company during Japan’s high growth period 70 years ago. In those days, Japan’s automobile industry was growing rapidly, and the export was expanding significantly. You could see a number of foreign cars speeding up in the Azabu and Takanawa districts. My mother, who was in her 40s, was a “super celebrity”, driving around in the red, Nissan SSS Skyline coupe, the most trendy automobile in those days. We often hopped in her car, together with Father and Sister, and enjoyed outings. My mother took care of family issues, supported her husband, and fulfilled an assisting role: In another words, she was just like a large foundation of our house.

I am sorry to say that she passed away this past October after celebrating her 96th birthday. Her departure from earth was just like “Kaguya-Hime (Princess Kaguya)”, quickly leaving us on a full-moon night and ascended to her husband who has been in the heaven for 17 years earlier. She enjoyed good health, and lived long enough to play with her great-grandchild.

It has been 40 years since I first got involved in the Minato UNESCO Association. How fast time has fled! All through these years, I was supported by my other’s power. Nothing has discouraged her; she was always cheerful and supported her family. Born in the year of dragon, a dragon lady! I believe that the latent energy that has supported our social life must be women’s voluntary contribution, voluntary spirit, unity and sustainability.

To the elderly people who survived the Showa Period! Let me dedicate gratitude and congratulations. Thank you, Mother, for your 96-year life. Please cheer us from the heaven. Finally, let me present the reader of this essay with “minimum 52 virtues that are contained in human mind.”

(To be continued on P. 4)

The First 2024 Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop "Carrying various things - Story of ocean surface currents"

Lecturer: Dr. MICHIDA Yutaka, Special Presidential Envoy for the UN Ocean Decade, and Specially Appointed Professor, Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute, The University of Tokyo

Date and Time: Saturday, July 20, 2024, 14:00-16:00

Venue: Minato City LIBRA Hall

Sponsor: Minato UNESCO Association

Co-sponsor: Minato City Board of Education

Supported by: National Federation of UNESCO

Associations in Japan & Tokyo Metropolitan
Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations



Marine science is the 14th goal of the SDGs. Carrying things through the ocean surface currents. He discusses various topics from this perspective and provides opportunities to think about the ocean and the earth's environment. The lecturer is Dr. MICHIDA Yutaka, who is the first Japanese person elected as the Chairperson of the UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. Dr. MICHIDA's field of expertise is physical oceanography, especially the structure and variability of ocean surface currents. What led him to research the ocean? He was brought up until the age of high school in a place near the coast of Hiroshima where you could smell the scent of the sea. Apparently, he was a "weather boy" when he was a child. While he studied Geophysics in his undergraduate studies at the university, he decided to conduct fluid experiments for his graduation research. It

seems that he discovered the fascination of the ocean by doing so.

① Some general stories about the oceans

-Challenges facing the ocean include global warming, sea level rise, acidification, and ecosystem functions, decrease in fisheries resources, marine pollution including plastics, and marine disasters.
-One of the roles of the ocean is to store heat. Most of the heat from global warming is absorbed by the ocean, so it is not easily noticeable. "The earth is only possible because of the ocean and life." Through the water cycle, terrestrial ecosystems also maintained by the presence of the ocean. Japan is surrounded by the sea and relies heavily on shipping and marine industries.

-The average depth of the world's oceans is 3,800m, the average water temperature is less than 4 degrees Celsius, and the salinity is 35g per 1kg of seawater.

-The distribution of water on earth is based on ocean water as 100, and the amount of other water in lakes, marshes, rivers, and groundwater is 0.018 respectively, 1.64 for icebergs and ice blocks, and 0.001 for water vapor. Thus, the amount of water in the ocean is overwhelmingly large.

-The water temperature in the middle of the Pacific Ocean (38 degrees north latitude, 170 degrees east longitude) is 1 degree Celsius at a depth of nearly 4000 meters, and 13 degrees Celsius near the sea surface. The temperature is around 13°C, and the salinity is about 34g at a depth of about 500m, and about 34.7g at a depth other than that. Measuring instruments are actually lowered into the sea via cable, water is sampled, and chemical analysis is carried out on board.

- The height of land is measured based on the average sea level, but the depth of the sea is measured based on the ebb of the tide.

② Drifting objects carried by ocean currents

Next, he explains his specialty, the movement of oceans and ocean surface currents, by introducing episodes from the coast of Japan. First of all, the location where the debris was found on the map is a map of the estimated area where the tail and fuselage debris fell due to the crash of the Japan

Airlines aircraft occurred in August 1985. The Japan Coast Guard determined the estimated fall area by predicting drift based on the speed of ocean currents and other factors. The next story is about a bottle containing a postcard Choshi High School released in October 1985 off the coast of Choshi to investigate ocean currents. The bottle was eventually discovered on the coast of Kikaijima, Kagoshima Prefecture, about 16 years later in January 2002. Dr. MICHIDA points out four possibilities based on the flow of ocean currents.

Inference 1: It came to Kikaijima almost directly southwest from off the coast of Choshi.

In the south of the Japanese archipelago, an ocean current called the Kuroshio current flows along the coast from west to east. Therefore, considering the flow distribution, this is highly unlikely. The Kuroshio current is seawater that is 100km wide and several hundred meters deep, flowing at a speed of 2 to 4 knots (1 to 2 m/s). The amount of water flowing straight along Japan and the Kii Peninsula is tens of millions of cubic meters per second (tens of thousands of times the flow rate of the Tone River). There is a channel that flows straight along the shore of Japan as well as the one that makes a big turn offshore.

Inference 2: It swerved south on the Kuroshio countercurrent and washed up.

Further south of the Kuroshio Current, there is an ocean current called the Kuroshio Countercurrent that flows from east to west. However, if this was the case, it may have arrived in a few months.

Inference 3: It washed up after going around the subtropical gyre several times.

The North Pacific Ocean has a large ocean current called the subtropical gyre. The Kuroshio Current is also part of this. It flows in a clockwise direction from the east coast of Japan → the west coast of North America → Hawaii → the southern sea of Japan. Based on the results of the investigation of the drifting buoy, it is possible that if it rode on it, it would have cycled around several times for 4 to 5 years and then washed up on Kikaijima. The conclusion is that it is quite possible considering the estimated time it takes to go around the subtropical circulation.

Inference 4: Traveled around the world's oceans and washed up on Kikaijima 16 years later. Considering the characteristics of currents near the surface of the world's oceans, this possibility is small and highly unlikely.

In fact, when we look at the places where the bottles released by Choshi High School have drifted ashore over the last 10 years, we can see that they have washed ashore in the southern islands of Japan, the Philippines, Guam, Hawaii, and the West Coast of the United States. The 51st one released in June 2021 was found on the Hawaii Island. Dr. MICHIDA did a Zoom interview with the family who actually picked up the bottle. In this way, it is possible to predict the path of drifting objects based on the position, direction, speed, flow rate, etc. of ocean currents.

③ Marine plastic pollution

5-13 million tons (2015 figures), equivalent to 1.5-5% of the plastic produced worldwide, ends up in the ocean. In terms of emissions by country, the first place is China (approx. 28%), the second is Indonesia (approx. 10%), and the third is the Philippines (approx. 6%), and Asian countries have a large share. Japan appears to be low at 30th place (approximately 0.5%). However, we are discharging between 20,000 and 60,000 tons of plastic into the ocean. (2010 figures) Early warnings about ocean plastic were issued in the early 1970s. What is the problem with marine plastic waste? Marine plastic debris in the ocean continues to increase. In 50 years, the amount of microplastics in seawater will reach a level where the impact on the ecosystem will be visible. It has been predicted that once plastic waste has leaked out in the ocean, it is virtually impossible to recover and it will unilaterally become smaller. There are many unknowns such as its density, long-term behavior, and biological effects.

Dr. MICHIDA answers frequently asked questions as follows:

- Isn't there no point in charging for plastic bags? →Although the proportion of plastic bags in the total amount is not large, it is quite meaningful as a way to raise awareness for not releasing plastic waste into the environment.
- Isn't the effect small even if you personally try your best? →The effect of 1000 people reducing

plastic waste little by little is greater than that of one person going plastic-free.

- Is it necessary to use plastic to prevent infectious diseases? →At least in the current situation, plastic products are effective as a preventive measure against infectious diseases, and it is important to properly dispose of them after use.
- Isn't recycling bad for the environment because it uses energy? →If the goal is solely to reduce CO2 emissions, the overall energy usage from plastic production to final disposal should be minimized. However, if marine plastics have significant negative impacts on the environment, it is highly meaningful to invest energy in implementing reduction measures.

④ United Nations Decade of Marine Science

At the United Nations General Assembly in December 2017, the period 2021 to 2030 was declared the "United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development." The UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) played a central role in formulating this implementation plan, and Dr. MICHIDA is currently the first Japanese to serve as the IOC's Chairperson.

The IOC was established within UNESCO in 1960 to promote international cooperation and coordination in ocean science. Its slogan, "One Planet, One Ocean," reflects the fundamental connection between Earth and its irreplaceable oceans.

Dr. MICHIDA emphasizes, "The Earth can only exist as it does because of the oceans, which are essential for life." He encouraged participants to recognize the importance of taking small, individual actions to contribute to ocean preservation.



(Written by UMENE K., the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

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(Continued from P. 1) To elderly people who have survived the turbulent Showa Era

★☆ Assertiveness, Caring, Confidence, Consideration, Cooperation, Courtesy, Creativity, Diligence, Excellence, Flexibility, Gentleness, Honesty, Honor, Idealism, Integrity, Kindness, Moderation, Loyalty, Modesty, Patience, Peacefulness, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility, Service, Self-discipline, Thankfulness, Trustworthiness, Understanding, and Love.♥♥

(Written by UTSUNOMIYA K., Director, and translated by MIYASHITA Y., Standing Director, the PR & Internet Committee)

Protocol Visit to newly elected Mayor SEIKE Ai of Minato City

Date: Thursday, August 29, 2024

Venue: Mayor's reception room, Minato City Hall

A group of MUA officers, including President TANABE Kiichiro, Vice Presidents ISHII Yoshiaki, IMAMURA Takako, ISOBE Toyoko and KOBAYASHI Takayuki, along with Secretary General KAWAMURA Takahiko, paid a protocol visit to Mayor Seike, through kind arrangements by Mr. NAKABAYASHI Jun-ichi, administrative manager of Minato City. Mayor Seike appeared clad in beautiful yellow sweater and white pants suit.

President Tanabe expressed gratitude for the City's continued subsidy for facilitating MUA's activities, while also asking her to undertake the position of advisor for MUA which her predecessors have accepted. He also briefed Mayor Seike about MUA's flagship programs, including international cultural lectures, world cooking workshops, Japanese speech contest, and bazar fundraising. Mayor Seike expressed interest in those programs.

I was impressed with Mayor Seike's vibrant personality and was convinced about a renewed future partnership between MUA and Minato City. I trust that Mayor Seike's objective to turn the city into a friendly international community will synchronize well with MUA's efforts to seek world peace. Let us make further efforts to promote dialog inside MUA and outside with related like-minded organizations to attain our long-term goals.



(Written by IMAMURA Takako, Vice President, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

MUA Salon
Music-oriented Trip to Germany & Austria
- Visits to places to remember Bach's music -

Speaker: NAGANO Hiroshi, President, Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of
UNESCO Associations, and Advisor, Minato UNESCO Association (MUA)

Date: Thursday, October 24, 2024

Venue: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

In this salon, Mr. NAGANO Hiroshi, formerly President and currently Advisor of MUA, gave a delightful slide show, reporting on his enjoyable and memorable trip to Europe in June 2024. The objective of this trip was to join the International Leipzig Bach Music Festival as a member of a Japanese chorus group which specializes in singing songs composed by Johann Sebastian Bach, one of the greatest composers in Europe. The group visited a historical church, related to J. S. Bach, located in Germany and Austria, and demonstrated their chorus of Bach's songs. When I asked Mr. Nagano for a possibility of his presentation on the said trip in MUA's salon, he generously accepted the offer, to my great pleasure.

At first, Mr. Nagano told us that he started to have interest in the German language and opera when he was a 3rd grader of senior high school. He chanced to attend the "Bayreuth Wagner Festival," visiting Japan from Germany in 1967, a very rare event in those days. The event featured three distinguished opera singers. That's when he was touched by the genuine European music and was motivated to expand his keen interest in this area.

Mr. Nagano made his first trip to Europe in 1968 when he was a university junior student. He got onboard a boat in Yokohama bound for Nakhodka. He showed us a precious photo of his old passport which shows the currency exchange records as well as a border passage certification stamped by the former Soviet Union (CCCP). In Germany, he observed the remains of the WW II devastation. During the trip, he also visited Rome, Italy and attended an opera, Aida. He was greatly impressed.

It was in 2021 when Mr. Nagano joined the Bach Academie Meiji Gakuin Tokyo, in response to its recruitment for new members. He started to regularly join the choir's practices thereafter and participated in their presentation in 2022 of Johannes Passion, composed by Bach, in 2023, followed by Requiem composed by Mozart.

The Bach Academie Meiji Gakuin choir's trip to Europe in June 2024 had a membership of about 50 people. The one-week trip started from their arrival in Frankfurt, followed by visits to Bayreuth, Leipzig and Vienna which abound in the historical spots related to genius composers of Germany.

In Bayreuth, Mr. Nagano visited the opera house (Bayreuth Festival Theater) which was designed by Richard Wagner, a top composer in the Roman opera and initiator of music drama. King Ludwig II of Bavaria supported Wagner financially. There is a rumor that the financing of the opera theater turned out to be one of the factors which caused the financial collapse of the Bavarian Dukedom, according to Mr. Nagano.



(Bayreuth Festival Theater)

As the performance of Wagner's operas lasts for long hours, it is the norm that a long intermission is provided to let attendees enjoy snacks and wine. Shortly before the intermission terminates, a group of brass instrument players line up on the veranda of the opera house and let the attendees be aware of the re-start of the opera, by music.

Next, the choir visited Leipzig, the main objective of their trip this time, where the “Leipzig Bach International Music Festival” has been annually held. This is the birthplace of Wagner. The choir visited St. Thomaskirche, a Lutheran evangelical Christian church built in 1496. There is a statue of Bach in front of the church. The coffin of Bach is permanently kept inside the church. No wonder the church is called the sanctuary of Bach. The choir sang five pieces composed by Heinrich Schutz, Joseph Anton Bruckner, Maximilian Reger, Arnold Schönberg, and J. S. Bach.



(St. Thomaskirche church)



(Bach's statue)

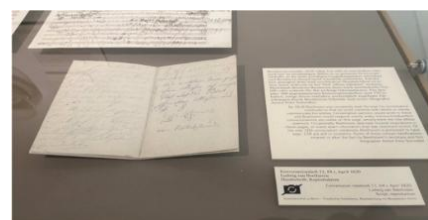
Mr. Nagano turned on the video and let us share audio-visually the chorus of the choir sung in German. We were all impressed by their performance. While in Leipzig, the choir visited the historical residences of Schumann and Mendelssohn.

The last place the choir visited was Vienna, the capital of Austria. Here they visited the Dominican Church, well known as the Church of St. Maria Rotunda, located within a five-minute walk from the famous Catholic Cathedral of St. Stephen. The church, soon after its reform, looked beautiful and bright. The sound in the spacious stone architecture was amazing. The choir sang a total of seven pieces, composed by H. Schutz, A. Bruckner, A. Schönberg, J. S. Bach, and W. A. Mozart.



(Performance at St. Thomas church)

While in Vienna, Mr. Nagano also visited Heiligenstadt and the Vienna Central Cemetery. In Heiligenstadt, a house is still preserved where Beethoven wrote his will. The will is well known as the Heiligenstadt Will. Inside the house, there were interesting exhibitions, including a hearing aid, used by Beethoven after he lost hearing sense, and the notebooks he used for written communication.



(Beethoven's notebooks)

In the Central Cemetery, there are graveyards of many musicians, including Johann Strauss father and son, Schubert, Beethoven, and Brahms. There is also a memorial graveyard of Mozart at the center. Mr. Nagano mentioned an interesting episode about Mozart's graveyard. After his funeral was held at the Cathedral of St. Stephen, Mozart's body was placed, mixed with other bodies, in a separate collective graveyard. Therefore, it was difficult to identify his body. After a monument was erected at the collective cemetery, it was relocated to the Central Cemetery.



(Vienna Central Cemetery)

After Mr. Nagano's presentation was over, we had a Q&A session. Questions ranged from the personality of Mr. HIGUCHI Ryuichi, the conductor of the Bach Academie Meiji Gakuin Tokyo, to details about St. Thomas Church, etc. Also, a request was made to let us know the Youtube URL where we can see the choir's trip to Europe.

(Written by ISHII Yoshiaki, Vice President, and translated by TAAHSHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

World Cooking Workshop

Taiwanese Home Dishes

Date: November 10, 2024

Venue: Minato Gender Equality Center Libra

Today's instructor, Chien Lilin, is originally from Taipei, Taiwan. Having once studied in Japan, she is now working at Taipei Cultural and Economic Office in Japan. She is also a busy homemaker, cooking Taiwan dishes for her three-generation family. Supporting Ms. Chien on the side was Ms. Lu Tzui, a young colleague at her workplace.

Today's Menu:

① **Fried rice noodles**

Stir-fry pork, carrot, cabbage, dried mushroom, dried shrimp and green onion

② **Beef stew**

Bring the water to a boil before tossing ingredients in the pot: beef shank, carrot, white radish, garlic and green onion. For flavoring, add soy sauce, star anise and rock sugar.

③ **Taiwan omelet**

Pour rehydrated kiriboshi and green onion into egg mixture. Cook in sesame oil.

④ **Wonton stuffed with shrimp and pork**

Ingredients include: minced pork, peeled shrimp and grated ginger. Add green onion flavored with oyster sauce, sesame oil and soy sauce, and then wrap it up with wonton dough. Boil wonton before putting it into chicken soup.

⑤ **Black sticky rice (with dried longan fruit)**

Mix black, purple and white sticky rice together and steam it, then add rice wine, logan fruit and brown sugar. Divide the dough into small portions and cover each of them with plastic wrap.

⑥ **Taiwan oolong tea**

At the beginning, Ms. Chien talked about Taiwan, of its historic sites and beauty spots, using video footage. When she asked the participants: "Have you ever been to Taiwan?", almost all of them raised hands in 'yes'. Thanks to Ms. Chien's kind instruction and Ms. Lu's support, all the attendees (29 of them) rolled up their sleeves and worked in a lively manner. We really enjoyed this cooking class which had partly sweet and partly exotic scent.



Top row: ② & ⑤, Down row: ①, ③ & ④

(Written by MATSUZAKI K., Acting Director, and translated by MIYASHITA Y., Acting Director, the PR & Internet Committee)

Minato Citizens Festival

Date & Time: Sat., Oct. 12, 2024 11:00 to 17:00

Sun., Oct. 13, 2024 10:00 to 16:00

Venue: Minato City Shiba-Park

It is the season when ginkgo nuts fall, but it was an unusually warm two days for October. It is said that more than 200,000 people attended the 'Minato-ku Festival' held in the Shiba Park area and Minato Park Shibaura. Because of delays in arranging transportation, we kept early customers waiting while we brought in items for the bazaar.

As soon as we displayed the items, a crowd gathered, and we were busy attending to them. A father and his 4-5 year old daughter found some children's clothes they liked, and she wanted to wear them immediately, and put on them inside the tent. I'm glad they found something she liked. It was a great opportunity to make use of unwanted items and donate the proceeds. On the 13th, the new Minato-ku mayor, SEIKE Ai, and the members of the executive committee, as well as the former mayor, TAKAI, visited each tent and encouraged people. Unfortunately, we were unable to prepare the panel and flyers introducing the activities of the Minato UNESCO Association this year. We would like to do it next year.



(Written by ISOBE T., Vice President, and translated by KODAMA K, the PR & Internet Committee)

FestiBalloon

Date & Time: Fri., Oct. 18, 2024 11:00 to 20:00

Venue: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

The rain we were worried about clearing up, and the events on the ground proceeded as scheduled. On the stage, there were performances by groups using balloons, and in the tents, there were sales of local products, hands-on workshops, and stalls from local shops. Inside the building, there were exhibitions by cultural clubs, making it a lively day. At the Office of Minato UNESCO Association, we introduced the activities of each committee. Taking this opportunity, we would like to express our appreciation to all who came to help us.



(Written by ISOBE T., Vice President, and translated by KODAMA K, the PR & Internet Committee)

The Hands-on Calligraphy Workshop

Date: October 5, 2024

Venue: Minato City Life-Long Learning Center 304

Participants: 34 (including instructors and staff)

Instructor: KANEDA Suimu (Member of the Modern Calligraphy Research Institute)

Content:

- Explanation of the history of calligraphy
- Practice on *Hanshi* paper using examples of hiragana, kaisho, sosho, and gyosho
- Writing favorite characters on shikishi board.

Feedback from participants:

- I enjoyed doing calligraphy for the first time in a while.
- The instructor's teaching method was excellent.
- I was glad to experience Japanese culture



One of the purposes of this event is to promote interaction between foreigners and Japanese people through Japanese culture. We are happy to have people from Sweden, Finland, Namibia, and Slovenia to join today. Nowadays, people tend to use email for new year's greetings, rather than handwriting, even in Japan. We believe participants appreciated the value of taking the time for handwriting with ink calmly.

One of the joys of calligraphy is to know about the style of a particular character. For example, the characters on the cover of the Japanese passport, '日本旅券' (Japan Passport), are written in seal script (篆書, tensho), which features unique, symmetrical shapes that serve as decorative characters. The characters for '壹万円' (ten thousand yen) on the 10,000 yen bill are written in clerical script (隸書, reisho), a form of artistic expression that showcases the beauty of the characters. This style has been retained even after the portrait on the bill changed from Yukichi Fukuzawa to Eiichi Shibusawa in 2024.

A regular script called 'Hitsu-go' was used for the characters '五円' (five yen) on the five-yen coin from 1945 to 1958. However, the five-yen coin in my wallet from 1995 does not feature 'Hitsu-go'. The character '湯' (hot water) often seen at public baths is frequently written in semi-cursive script. The number of *Hanshi* papers used for practice reflects everyone's enthusiasm, and I am relieved to see that they are satisfied with the characters they completed on the shikishi board. Through calligraphy, they experienced the fun of writing characters.



(Written by HIRAKATA K., Vice President, and translated by KODAMA K., the PR & Internet Committee)

Hands-on Workshop of “IKEBANA,” Japanese Flower Arrangement

Date : November 19, 2024

Venue : Minato City life-long-learning Centre 101

Ikebana began as a custom of offering flowers to Buddha, and it is said that the first school of Ikebana, Ikenobo, has a history of over 500 years. This year, the Minato UNESCO Association once again welcomed Mr. NAKAMURA Masakazu from the Ikenobo Central Training Institute as an instructor and held the second Ikebana workshop following last year's event. On the day, 24 participants, including 14 foreigners, experienced Ikebana. The activities included:

- Explanation of the history and philosophy of Ikebana
- Demonstration by the instructor
- Hands-on Ikebana (free-style flower arrangement) experience

First, Mr. Nakamura, the instructor, talked about Ikebana, explaining that in Ikenobo, they value looking at plants as they are and respecting nature. This philosophy, which sees beauty not only in blooming flowers but also in insect-eaten leaves and withered leaves as reminders of the cycle of life, sounded fresh to many participants, including foreigners. Then, Mr. Nakamura explained the materials and tools, demonstrating Ikebana while explaining key points such as imagining the natural appearance of plants and considering the composition.

After that, the participants also worked on Ikebana using the same materials. They completed their work while considering the characteristics of the plants and flowers and the overall balance. The instructor, who also holds Ikebana workshops overseas, provided explanations that were easy to understand and interesting for both Japanese and foreign participants. Feedback from participants included comments such as 'I want to learn more,' 'I want to try Ikebana at home,' 'It was interesting to create space and respect the life of plants,' and 'I'm really glad I participated. I deeply appreciate the enthusiastic participants and Mr. Nakamura for his careful guidance and advice on each of the participants' work.



(Written by YOKOI A., Chairperson, the Hands-on Cultural Workshop Committee, and translated by KODAMA T., the PR & Internet Committee)

Visit to the Minato UNESCO Association Japanese Language Class

Tagawa-sensei, a veteran teacher with 20 years of teaching experience, teaches the Minato UNESCO's Japanese Language Class every Saturday morning. For those who have the opportunity to live in Japan and study Japanese, she teaches the lesson with the aim of getting them used to the way Japanese people speak, since "daily conversation" is important, as it is directly related to their daily lives. She explains the casual Japanese conversation style and has them use their ears and mouths a lot by having them speak in applied conversations.



Since the class is centered on speaking, it is not uncommon for one comment to lead to a big conversation. The topics range from small everyday questions to Japanese politics and economics, and there are many side trips. However, it becomes an opportunity for everyone to learn about their own country's culture and common sense, and the conversations and classes are lively despite the poor Japanese. "It's quite difficult to teach classes according to the curriculum," says Tagawa-sensei with a laugh. Today is the last day of the summer course, and after the lesson, donuts and tea were served, and we had a casual chat.

(Written & translated by ISHIAI K., Vice Chairperson, the Japanese Speech Contest Committee)

Sending supplies to the Mindanao Children's Library

In April 2024, TAKAKO Imamura of the Minato UNESCO Association visited and stayed at the Mindanao Children's Library. After her return, she gave us an opportunity to hear about the specific relief supplies needed locally.

In previous years, we packed up the daily necessities that could not be sold at the Minato City festival, but this year we prepared many items that were requested locally. In addition to the usual daily necessities, we included "3 blue tarps," "1 dozen Sakura Copic pencils with 12 pieces," "200 sheets of origami paper," "30 play balls anywhere," and "20 children's study notebooks." All of them were donated by our association's "New People's Association Esprit Nouveau" unit. Five members of the unit also participated in the packing work. With members who have experience in moving overseas, we used life hacks for packaging and packing with low risk of damage. The work was completed with a Christmas letter from the Minato UNESCO Association.



her daughter, who participated from Akabane Elementary School. The daughter donated her origami creations as well as a child-sized T-shirt and skirt that she had chosen herself. Okumura-san, who runs this activity every year, asked if the aforementioned new MUA people would like to join. This was how this joint project was started and realized. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Imamura-san, who played a vital role in visiting the site, Isobe-san, who organized the work on the day, and all the other participants. We feel that this was a very meaningful opportunity for interaction between new and existing members of the Minato UNESCO Association.

(Written & translated by ISHIAI K., Vice Chairperson, the PR & Internet Committee)

2025 MUA Officers & Directors

President	TAANABE Kiichiro	Former Board Director, Mitsubishi Petrochemical (today Mitsubishi Chemical Corp.)
Vice President	ISHII Yoshiaki	Former Chief, Fire Suppression Division and Chief, Azabu Fire Station, Tokyo Fire Department
	//	ISOBE Toyoko
	//	IMAMURA Takako
	//	Member, the Circulo International de Cultura Hispanoamerica (CICHA)
	//	KOBAYASHI Takayuki
Standing Director	OKUMURA Kazuko	Former MUA Vice President
	//	KASAHARA Masako
	//	Director, Ura-senke Tea Ceremony Class
	//	SATO Ritsuko
	//	TAGAWA Junko
	//	Japanese language instructor
	//	FURUICHI Yoko
	//	MATSUZAKI Kazuko
	//	Medical doctor
	//	MIYASHITA Yukari
	//	Former MUA Vice President
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Director	UTSUNOMIYA Kazumi	
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	//	Professor, Aquatic Environmental Education, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology
	//	SHIBUYA Megumi
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	//	President, Music Association of MINATO; Director, Minato City
	//	SHIMIZU Gunji
	//	Sports, Culture & Health Foundation; President, Minato City Doyo
	//	Shoka no Kai; Honorary Counselor, Minato City Chorus
	//	SUZUKI Akemi
	//	TSUBOYA Newell
	//	Ikuko
	//	CEO, Tokyo International School
	//	NAKAMAE Yuki
	//	Minato City Council Member
	//	HIRAKATA Kazuyo
	//	Former MUA VP, Former member of Yokohama Housing Policy
		Committee
		MIWA Emiko

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	//	MORIMURA Shunsuke	Former MUA VP; Corporate Advisor, Morimura Bros., Inc.
	//	YAMADA Setsuko	Attorney
	//	© FUKUMOTO Yoshiro	Representative Director, General Incorporated Association Asset Design Agency
Auditor		TANAHASHI Seiichi	VP of Hino-Redlands Sister Cities Association
	//	NAKAGAWA Norio	Representative Director, Chiemori Corporation; Former Chairman of Tokyo JC Minato Koshikai
Honorary Chairman		MIWA Kimitada	Professor Emeritus, Sophia University, Former MUA President
Advisor		AKASHI Yasushi	Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; former Advisor, the International House of Japan
	//	ITOH Kohei	President, Keio University
	//	TAKAI Mitsuko	Former MUA President
	//	SEIKE Ai	Mayor of Minato City
	//	NAGANO Hiroshi	President, Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations; Former MUA President
	//	MIKAMI Yoichiro	President, Institute of Sounds Arts
Counselor		KIKUCHI Kensuke	Former MUA Vice President; President, Fuse Limited Liability Company; Former Chairman of Tokyo JC Minato Koshikai
	//	KISO Isao	Former Ambassador, Permanent Delegation Japan to UNESCO
		© Newly appointed	(Valid until April 2026)

UNESCO Press release

Internet Access: UNESCO and ICANN join forces to improve linguistic diversity online (27 February 2025)

UNESCO and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) are announcing a new agreement to enhance linguistic diversity in the digital world. This will make the Internet more accessible to hundreds of millions of users. Under this new agreement, UNESCO and ICANN will cooperate to support the secure use of additional scripts and languages in the Internet's domain name system (DNS), encompassing the domain names and email addresses that are key for access and online communication. (Excerpt)

Minato UNESCO Association is a citizens' voluntary membership organization that promotes Japanese traditional culture, holds cross-cultural workshops and presents multicultural events and international symposia for world peace. For any questions or comments about our articles, please contact our secretariat office at:

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