

■ Topics : Letters from alumni

Okayama University International Alumni Association - A bridge to the world.

Zhang Hong

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I am Zhang Hong, a professor at the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences of Okayama University. I first came to Okayama University in 1989 and spent two years here as a master's student. After this I took my doctoral degree at Hiroshima University and subsequently began teaching corporate law at the Graduate School of Law of Beijing University whilst later enrolling as researcher at places such as Tokyo University's Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology and the Law School of Washington University. In April of 2000 I returned to Okayama University (my alma mater) to become a professor in the Department of Law. In this e-bulletin I would like to take the opportunity to talk about my experiences in Okayama and express my gratitude both to the university and the people of this area for the moral and material support they have given me.

First of all then, why did I choose Okayama University? I first came to Japan through joining a one-year training program in Japan when I was a member of a government-sponsored youth group. This experience taught me that the actual Japan is very different from the one pictured in textbooks. Meeting with residents of this wonderful city, Okayama, I was able to learn many things, thanks to its different culture and customs, for which I am really grateful. When my training program ended, I



The Belgrade Branch of Okayama University's International Alumni Association was established in December 2014. The event, which took place in Serbia, was favored by a visit from President Mrkić. In the picture from the right, Prof. Kayoko Yamasaki (Department of Letters, Belgrade University), Prof. Zhang Hong (Faculty of Law at Okayama University), President Mrkić, Kiyoshi Morita (President, Okayama University), Prof. Michitaka Suzuki (Department of Letters, Okayama University).



Zhang Hong, chairing the General Meeting of Okayama University International Alumni Association(OUIAA) in October 2015.

was determined to come back to Japan and study. The following year, I started my life as an exchange student in Okayama University.

In my eyes, Okayama University excels in comparison to many other universities, because the University is blessed with the beauties of nature, has kind and gentle people, and a beautiful campus. I also love living in Okayama City because it feels like my second hometown. Looking back, I feel that my experience on the exchange program taught me many things and changed me as a person. I was able to develop better communication skills, become more confident about myself and also more flexible with the people around me. In addition, I learned the importance of empathy, of not just pursuing my own selfish interests, but of trying to see things from the other person's point of view.

We have a Chinese proverb which means “When you receive a favor, you should not forget to give back double the amount.” I am not sure how I can do this, but I have decided anyway that I can begin to return the favor by becoming a bridge between Japan and China, and try to work for closer relations between the two. In this way, I hope to contribute to society.

As president of Okayama University International Alumni Association, I am trying my best to establish more overseas branches of our university all around the world. In 2015, we have branches in Germany, Istanbul, Egypt, America in Europe and America, and China, Taiwan, Korea, Mongolia, Thailand, Myanmar, Viet Nam and many more in Asia, a total of 46 branches. These branches not only establish friendly connections with local communities, they also invite successful students to exchange programs in Okayama University. The sixth general meeting is scheduled to be held in October 2016, and by this time we hope to have increased the number of established branches to fifty, while also expanding the activities of these branches. I hope all these efforts will be fruitful.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who have done so much to support us, and I look forward very much to continue to receive your valuable support for the further development of both Okayama University and our International Alumni Association.



The Cambodia Branch of Okayama University's International Alumni Association was established in December 2015. The event, which took place in Phnom Penh, was favored by a visit from Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education.

In the picture from the right, Sieng Sovanna (Director of National Institute of Education), Hang Chuon Naron,; Kiyoshi Morita (President, Okayama University) Prof. , Kita Masakazu (Department of Graduate School of Education, Okayama University). Prof. Zhang Hong (Faculty of Law at Okayama University). Prof. Tatsuo Iwasaki, (Department of Anesthesiology and Resuscitology all rights reserved, Okayama University)