

Conveying “Fukushima Today”



Mr. Akira Ikegami (front center) surrounded by the student reporters and alumni of Journalism School

Elementary, Junior High, and High School Students Creating Newspapers

Journalism School

August 8, 10, 11 & 17, 2024

The Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum
Koriyama Youth Center, Koriyama Citizens' Exchange Plaza “Big Eye”

Reporting on the Disaster and the Progress of Revitalization

On the first day, the opening ceremony was held at the Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum in Futaba Town. Journalist Akira Ikegami delivered a special lecture with a message of encouragement, saying, “There are things that can only be seen and understood because you live in Fukushima. Accurately reporting and conveying the facts is our mission.”

After touring the Memorial Museum, the students were divided into six teams and interviewed the following organizations: Asano Nenshi (Futaba Town), the Obori Soma Potters' Cooperative Association (Namie Town), Soma Futaba Fisheries Cooperative (Namie Town), Namie Branch of the Futaba Police Station (Namie Town), Ukedo Rice Planting Dance (Namie Town), and Reprun Fukushima (Tomioka Town). While taking notes and photos, they listened to the thoughts of those involved in the recovery from the disaster.

On the second and third days, at the Koriyama Youth Center in Koriyama City, the students received guidance for newspaper creation. Mr. Yoshiaki Takeuchi, a lecturer from Soma High School

with extensive experience in advising school newspapers, along with journalists from local newspapers (Fukushima-Minpo and Fukushima Minyu Shimbun), and alumni of the Journalism School, provided advice. They worked on creating their own newspaper layouts. Based on their interview notes, they wrote articles, selected photos, and came up with headlines to complete their newspapers.

On the final day, the students participated in a presentation at the Koriyama Citizens' Exchange Plaza, “Big Eye,” where each team showcased their completed newspapers. They shared their reflections, such as, “Through the interviews, I understood the hardships people faced at the time,” and “I realized that it is important for younger generations like us to take an interest in the story and pass it on.”

The Journalism School, now in its 12th year, is organized by Fukushima Prefecture's “Fukushi-ma-no-manabi” committee, with special collaboration from the Fukushima Minpo and Fukushima Minyu Shimbun.

The “Journalism School” where students in Fukushima Prefecture reported on the revitalization following the Great East Japan Earthquake and TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident was held over four days: August 8, 10, 11, and 17, 2024. A total of 37 students, ranging from fifth graders to third-year high school students, participated and interviewed companies and organizations involved in revitalization efforts in the Soso region. Through creating newspapers, they conveyed “Fukushima Today.”

Special Lecturer: Mr. Akira Ikegami

“It is important to know what happened and convey it.”



Journalist Mr. Akira Ikegami answering questions from children.

On the final day, special lecturer and journalist Akira Ikegami provided feedback. Mr. Ikegami offered advice on the strengths and areas for improvement, saying, “Including specific figures makes it easier for readers to understand,” and “Having a face photo of the people mentioned in the

article helps convey who they are.” In his overall remarks, he emphasized, “Thirteen years have passed since the disaster, and there are people who have not experienced it. It is important to learn what happened and communicate how revitalization can be achieved, as you all did in your reporting.”

Before the presentation, during a luncheon with the students, there was a question: “It says on the internet that Mr. Ikegami likes macarons. Is that true?” He replied, “It's not true. However, your question, ‘Is that true?’ is the right one to ask.” He highlighted the importance of not blindly trusting information from the internet and verifying it yourself.

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