

Learning from One Another

The Japanese government is pursuing policies to strengthen a human network linking Japan and foreign countries. Osamu Sawaji of the *Japan Journal* reports.

One of Japan's well-known foreign student assistance systems is the Japanese government scholarships system. Established in 1954, the system has provided scholarships to more than 83,000 students from approximately 160 different countries. In addition, to assist foreign students in finding employment in Japan, the government supports universities with essential "business Japanese" language classes, internships at Japanese companies, and other employment activities.

These human resource development systems have been devised to facilitate coordination between academia and industry. One example of this is Gunma University, which has been supporting foreign students' education and employment by cooperating with local auto parts companies in a consortium. Employees of the participating companies teach foreign students Japanese business etiquette or support them by hiring them as interns. As a result, many foreign students are employed by local companies, invigorating local industry.

At the same time, the Japanese government sends young Japanese to work as interns over-

seas. For example, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry started the dispatch of interns through the Internship for METI Global Internship Program this fiscal year. This program provides young university students or workers under the age of thirty-five with internship opportunities at government-affiliated organizations related to infrastructure and local corporations in developing countries lasting three to six months. It is expected that 100 people will be sent to ten countries, concentrating on Asia, including Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar and the Philippines. Working adults will make up about 60% of total participants. They will be dispatched to government-affiliated public companies, such as electric utilities and railroads, and to private sector companies in manufacturing and other industries.

Among those companies hosting interns, there are many that wish to strengthen their relationships with Japan. As Japanese society becomes globalized, each country enjoys advantages and this is tied to the invigoration of every nation. This certainly can be said to be a "win-win" system. 

ANNOUNCEMENT

New Residency System

Under the new residency system, beginning on July 9, 2012, Resident Cards will be issued to foreign nationals residing in Japan. The current Alien Registration System will be abolished. Persons residing in Japan who have been granted resident status for a period of stay of more than three months will be issued a Resident Card. Resident Cards will not be issued to persons with Temporary Visitor status or persons with Diplomatic or Official status.

For more on the new residency system, refer to the following Immigration Bureau URL:
http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/index.html (English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese)