



# TOSHIMAGAOKA TIMES

Special Edition

February 2017

## Student-run 'Touri-sai' highlights club activities

"Touri-sai," the Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School festival, took place on Nov. 5 and 6, 2016.

Touri-sai is the school's biggest event and many people come annually. Many young children who want to enter Toshimagaoka visit. This year, about 14,000 people attended.

There are about 50 school clubs and Touri-sai is a chance for them to perform. In classrooms, many clubs showed their activities and had games for children to play.

In the gyms and halls, drama or dance clubs performed on the stage. Touri-sai is the biggest stage for many, so they practice



Audience members pack the hall at Touri-sai.

very hard. There was a large audience enjoying the performance.

Touri-sai is run by the students and second-year high school students take a leading role and all

students participate in Touri-sai. Guided by teachers on safety issues, the Touri-sai student committee is in charge. The students perform different tasks such as

working at the reception desk or making decorations. Touri-sai discussions start in May and students prepare during summer vacation.

Regarding the Touri-sai name, it was chosen by students in 2001. "Touri" means "peaches" and "plums." It comes from an old Chinese saying, "Peaches and plums attract many people by their good smells without saying anything." The name was created also with the wish for students to grow up like peaches and plums. This is similar to the school motto.

By Satomi Kishi

## English Drama Club is 'heroine' of Touri-sai!

At Touri-sai, all clubs have the chance to show their activities.

The students in this school must join at least one of the 50 clubs. Club activities finish at 5 p.m. in summer. This means students don't have much Touri-sai practice time.

The English Drama Club, or EDC, is making rapid progress lately. The EDC was set up in 2006 and has 47 members. The club performs a famous drama in English at Touri-sai every year, and this year they did "Aladdin." The club's performance was very

popular and saw great success.

One of the members of the EDC said: "Summer vacation and the two weeks before Touri-sai are the hardest for us. In summer, we have practice almost every day to improve the play. We use summer vacation efficiently, but keep a tight schedule. The two weeks before Touri-sai are most important."

A characteristic of Toshimagaoka can be seen through the club activities and "Bear fruits in spite of little time" has caught on among students as a motto.

Principal Shino Takehana spoke

about club activities, saying: "First, I want the students to develop abilities that all students should have. To continue something interesting for themselves is very important. They can learn the difficulty and importance of leading people who have different thoughts. Also, their club activities relate to their study efforts. Second, the students should have the experience of doing something that has a time limit. The activities give variety to the whole school."

We will not be able to take our eyes off the development of



EDC members perform "Aladdin."

Toshimagaoka's club activities, including the English Drama Club.

By Chihiro Matsuda

## Student volunteers very important to success of school festival

Principal Shino Takehana said: "What I like the most about Touri-sai is that it's not only for the students. Many of them know the pleasure of amusing people with their own ideas and activities."

Students are eager to work as staff. About 800 students work in 12 sections. Each plays an important role in Touri-sai, giving a sense of accomplishment. At Touri-sai one of the sections is the school-promotion section, which introduces our school to visitors.

Its job is to run the "Toshimagaoka Tour," "Let's Try 'Unshin' and Tie," "Toshimagaoka Bulletin" and more. In the "Toshimagaoka Tour," people can visit classrooms and other facilities with student guides. This is very popular with children who want to enter Toshimagaoka.

In "Let's Try Unshin and Tie," you can try our school tradition, unshin, and original knotting. Both are something students do every day, but it's quite difficult

for rookies. Unshin is sewing white cloth with red thread for five minutes every day. At first, it's hard to pull a needle that was just sewn, but it improves their concentration. At the unshin competition, students from each class are chosen in September and compete for neatness and length of stitches. The competition is a Touri-sai highlight. Some students sew over five meters. The "Toshimagaoka Bulletin" offers information about school activi-

ties and visitors can write comments about Touri-sai.

By Manaka Mori

### NOTICE TO READERS

Toshimagaoka Times was created by a group of 18 selected students of Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School in Tokyo. The first- and second-graders of the senior high school have endeavored to portray their school from various angles for non-Japanese readers at home and abroad.  
— Editor

## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

## Be proud of traditional Japanese manners

“Reiho,” or traditional manners, is taught in Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School.

In Toshimagaoka, all students study reiho in class and also they can study it further in club activities. The heart of reiho is a feeling of consideration to others that has been inherited in the Japanese soul since the Kamakura Period. Reiho is a form that expresses the Japanese soul, and thus learning it is not only to learn how to behave, but also to learn about the Japanese soul. However, because of formal and outdated images of reiho, few Japanese have a positive attitude about studying it, and it is rare to adopt reiho as a subject. The reasons why students in Toshimagaoka have reiho classes have a lot to do with history of Toshimagaoka.

Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School started as a sewing school. The foundation of the school was teaching ethical and traditional Japanese morals, so not only sewing, reading and writing, but also reiho was taught strictly. The



Makiko Suzuki (left) instructs a student to open "fusuma" in the reiho way in a Japanese tatami room.

reiho club was created officially in 1953 when club activities started. It means the manners club is one of the oldest and most-traditional clubs in Toshimagaoka.

“Unshin,” sewing time to foster the ability to concentrate, is treasured as a symbol of the founding spirit of Toshimagaoka, and Futaki Kenichi — the sixth principal of Toshimagaoka — paid attention to reiho because he thought reiho is the core philosophy to succeed the spirit of the school founder and wanted students to acquire elegant manners. Then he introduced the education

of manners in 2006.

The reiho class is composed of three lessons. They’re held at a hall, a Japanese-style room and a Western-style room, and are taught by Makiko Suzuki, who is a teacher of Ogasawara-style manners.

At the hall, the students sit to listen to Suzuki. She taught us importance and history of reiho.

At the Japanese-style room, they learn Japanese manners. They take their lessons while kneeling on tatami. They learn how to behave such as how to enter, stand up, sit down, greet and move. Also they learn Japanese

morals such as the importance of respecting the elderly in Japan.

At the Western-style room, they learn Western manners. They learn how to walk, sit down and how to meet someone and bow. Also, they learn why Japanese people learn Western manners.

Recently, society has become global. Education to adjust to it is being carried out in Japan. About the status of the manners, Shino Takehana, who is the principal of Toshimagaoka, said she supports learning reiho, one of the Japanese traditional cultures, and hopes the students introduce themselves with pride when they go abroad. Also, regarding the future of manner education, Takehana said bowing and Japanese morals, not only sewing, are the spirit of sympathizing with others, and through the lessons, they will gain the trust of others by practicing it.

Through the education of manners, Toshimagaoka wishes to make its students loved by everyone.

By Chika Ezure, Rina Mitani and Kotori Mawatari

## The secret behind the success of the Toshimagaoka go club

Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School is usually regarded as a school with a focus on studying. But actually Toshimagaoka focuses on not only studying, but also club activity and subjects such as P.E. On this page, we will introduce the Toshimagaoka go club that actively participates in matches and tournaments in various prefectures, while the next page will introduce the Millenium Dance, which is Toshimagaoka’s unique exercise.

The Toshimagaoka go club has a long history. It was founded about 30 years ago. It has boasted nationwide activities participating in tournaments and other matches in the past 10 years. It won the championship in the nationwide tournaments in recent years. What is the secret for the strength of the



National go champions, Rikako Hirose, Ayako Konishi and Kana Iriuchijima

club?

Rikako Hirose, Ayako Konishi and Kana Iriuchijima are the members of the club who won the championship in the girls’ team category of the national high school go tournament last year.

What is the atmosphere of the club? Hirose said: “It is homey and pleasant. Members are close friends.” When we visited the club, which meets weekly, members were washing go stones for the school festival. They were working together and looked happy. Her expression seemed to be reliable. About their favorite point of the club, Konishi said, “There

are not strict, but rather soft relationships between students of different ages.”

Iriuchijima said, “Novices and beginners can join the club without any trouble.”

Go is a game with a winner and a loser and it is likely that the gap between strong and weak will be reflected clearly. Also, novices and beginners generally shy away from joining the club that has high reputation nationwide. Why is the club easy for novices and beginners? What is the secret of that?

A member of the club who has played go for only two years said, “I never get nervous when playing against good players.” Also, she said: “We can raise our motivation because we can be taught by good players. Moreover, good players can improve their go skills by teaching. It’s not rare that younger students beat older ones, but the older ones get respect all the same. We play go happily to-

gether.”

Members are close friends and age and skills don’t matter. Such diversity provides stimulation to each other. These spirits are not only true of the go club, but of the whole of Toshimagaoka.

Lastly, Iriuchijima said of the attraction of go: “Go seems simple. But actually, it is very profound and difficult.”

Hirose said, “It reflects personality of players.”

Additionally, Konishi said: “Age of players is not relevant. We can play go with kindergarten children and senior citizens.”

They really love go. It’s rare for girls’ school to have a go club. Toshimagaoka has other unique clubs. It has about 50 clubs in total. Students can find things they want to do, and they can be devoted to them. It is the attraction of Toshimagaoka.

By Haruka Otsuki and Moegi Ono

## TEACHERS

# Unique aerobic routine nurtures school spirit

In Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School, students perform an aerobic routine as a warm-up exercise.

Physical education teacher, Yuko Watanabe, created the "Millenium Dance" aerobic routine.

We interviewed her to learn about it in more detail.

This tradition of the exercise started in the 1980s. There was an aerobics boom and Watanabe was obsessed with it.

One day, the principal asked her to come up with an aerobic routine to do in P.E. class. Students had been doing "rajio taiso" (radio exercise) then, but the principal thought it was out of date and the school needed some kind of new



Students perform the "Millenium Dance" on sports day.

exercise. That's how our aerobic routine was invented by Watanabe. The Millenium Dance we do now was invented in 2000 and we have been doing it ever since.

It has positive effects on our health as it improves cardiopulmonary function and builds stamina.

ina.

However, what you should pay attention to most is having beautiful posture.

In fact, Watanabe grew two centimeters taller.

Also, we can lose weight. This is a very positive effect for students.

Students must think about which part of body is used when they dance.

So, the school has a test on the Millenium Dance.

If we fail it, students have to do it again and again. We call it "Try Again."

It is the spirit of Toshimagaoka!

Watanabe said that she wanted to spread this exercise to other high schools in Japan. She is proud of it. I hope that current and former students of Toshimagaoka and readers who are interested in Toshimagaoka will see the dance after reading this article.

By Midori Yuki, Nanako Kitano and Rena Muto

## Teachers fondly remember school's 120-year history

Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School has a history of more than 120 years.

We asked our teachers who graduated from this school about the differences between now and when they were in school.

First, Miho Asai, who teaches Japanese, answered. She teaches first grade at the senior high school now and she entered Toshimagaoka in 2001.

Regarding the difference between her school days and today, She said, "It's the color of the training suits." When she was a student at Toshimagaoka the students wore emerald green suits. Now students wear deep blue training suits.

The other thing that she mentioned is about the name of "Touri-sai," the school festival held at Toshimagaoka.

Many students have an attachment to this name and value it very much. But this name hasn't been used for very long.

This name, Touri-sai, was chosen in 2001 when Asai was a first grade junior high school student. Touri-sai is an indispensable word for Toshimagaoka now, and it has been more than 15 years since it began to be used.

Second, we had an interview with biology teacher Shino Inoue.



Japanese language teacher Miho Asai remembers her school days.

She graduated from Toshimagaoka High School in 1997.

First, we asked her about teaching policy. At the time, there was teaching policy of being good-natured and being loved by everybody. Additionally, there was more time spent on home economics than there is now.

But more and more students have gone on to enter university, and woman's social advancement has become commonplace as society has changed.

So it has recently become important to cultivate talent that can be applied to society in the future.

She said, "Among them, I would like to work on it without forgetting school's old beliefs."

Finally, she mentioned students as an attraction of Toshimagaoka. The school al-

ways has many earnest and hard-working students, which pleases the teachers.

Finally, we spoke to Aya Hasegawa. Hasegawa is a home economics teacher and a homeroom teacher of second-year junior high school students.

First, she gave us information about classes. In those days, she had a calligraphy class once a week and it took place in a library that was smaller than the one we have now. In addition, she learned how to write a resume with a fountain pen.

Secondly, she spoke about school uniforms. In those days, a sweater was not part of the school uniform and coats were thin and flimsy. Also, the school bag was old-fashioned. She used "furoshiki" to bring things that cannot be put into the bag.

Thirdly, she talked about lunch. In those days, there was no cafeteria, but bakery and milk salespeople used to come to the school every day. Students bought a ticket for it, and received their lunch through the person on day duty. Also, there was tea that students could drink freely in the classrooms. They all brought their own cups in order to drink it.

And, the person on day duty took hot water from the hot-water service room to the classes.

Next, she spoke about slippers. In those days, she used slippers separately from indoor shoes.

Slippers' colors were different for each grade, the same as today. She could choose putting on either shoes or slippers. But she had to put on shoes for P.E. and cooking classes.

Also, there was only one class at the junior high school in those days and 10 classes at the high school.

All these episodes represent how things were back then, but some of the spirits have been inherited by current students.

Finally, we asked her about the appeal of this school.

The school is private, so teachers are seldom transferred to other schools. Therefore, graduates feel at ease about often visiting.

So the school is a place where graduates can come back to.

Teachers' eagerness and kindness will make students tough and wise, and this school will remain a precious place for students after graduation.

In this way, Toshimagaoka has become a school where students can live more comfortably according to changes in the times.

By Yumi Sato, Mai Taira, Mizuki Kagawa and Miki Yoshida

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

## Students proactive in English learning

Today, many schools in Japan put effort into English education. What actions does Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School take? Toshimagaoka has programs for students learning English such as studying abroad for two weeks or three months, studying at British Hills and lectures for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Some Toshimagaoka students attend Waikato Diocesan Schools for Girls in New Zealand (Dio) for three months, a program that began in 2015. During this program, students stayed with local residents and went to Dio. Our school and Dio have had a relationship since 1989, when our teachers visited schools in Canada and New Zealand. This school is also where some of Toshimagaoka students study and stay for two weeks in summer, a program that began about 25 years ago that aims to improve students' English skills.

The duration of stay was extended to three months when Principal Shino Takehana went to Dio in 2012 and asked it to make a deeper alliance. Takehana has wanted to make a program for long-term overseas study, and just at that moment, she discovered a private foundation in Tokyo offering to provide high school students with financial support for studying abroad. She says that experiencing the differences in culture between Japan and other countries and becoming able to accept them will have a great impact on students' futures. She sent out a questionnaire and asked about the benefits of studying for three months in New Zealand. Most of the students who stayed in New Zealand for three months say that experiencing a different culture made them change their views.

Students have training in advance, but there is little support in studying abroad. Thus they have to study in the classes during the three months on their own. It is essential for students to take active and voluntarily actions. However, the study-abroad program makes students proactive and teaches cross-cultural understanding.

As such, Toshimagaoka has a variety of programs to nurture students' global spirit. According to a survey in Toshimagaoka, 77.3 percent of its students want to study abroad. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 42.3 percent of all high school students want to study abroad while 57.7 percent don't. This means that Toshimagaoka students are strongly interested in studying abroad. British Hills and studying abroad are so popular that the school has to hold annual lotteries to select students for the programs. On the other hand, there are many problems with globalization. Forty-six percent of the students are worried about their communication skills, which is the biggest reason why they hesitate to study abroad. Those who don't want to study abroad note cultural differences, lack of safety and, especially, the communication barrier.

There is also a problem with the timing of studying abroad. Most students want to study abroad for more than a year and 73 percent want to do so while they are university students, indicating that it is hard for high school students to study abroad for a long time. It is difficult to balance studies and language skills. Additionally, 59 percent don't want a job requiring English skills. As to which jobs require English, students cite many such as diplomats, flight attendants, translators, interpreters



Toshimagaoka students (from left) Kanoko Hattori, Shiyu Li, Shiori Kokubun, Natsumi Miki and Ayami Sakai at New Zealand's Dio in 2016

and so on. In global society many jobs require English, but more than half the students don't have confidence using English and are unwilling to use it in the future, even though they think learning English is essential.

Amid such a situation, the Toshimagaoka English education program is facing change and Takehana is eager to reform English teaching. Worrying about the students' communication skills, she says that it is important to develop Japanese skills first, instead of English. It is hard for students to acquire a variety of thoughts. That's where studying abroad helps. Takehana believes the purpose of studying abroad programs is coming to think from a different point of view rather than speaking English fluently.

"It is significant for students to take a broad view of things, act in-

dependently and deepen their understanding of different cultures. Especially initiative and cross-cultural understanding don't tend to be acquired unless you go abroad because Japan has a culture where people can understand each other easily. Moreover, a highly educated person who has technical knowledge is desired as globalization is spreading. At first, I want you to be a student to improve basic academic ability steadily," she said. Also she is thinking of opening a lecture for fourth and fifth grade students to give students an opportunity to discuss topics and make presentations in English.

Through change in students' awareness, Toshimagaoka will become more globalized.

By Riho Kutsumizu, Chie So, Ririka Morita

Chart 1

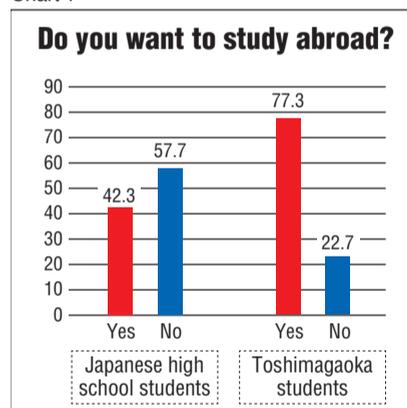
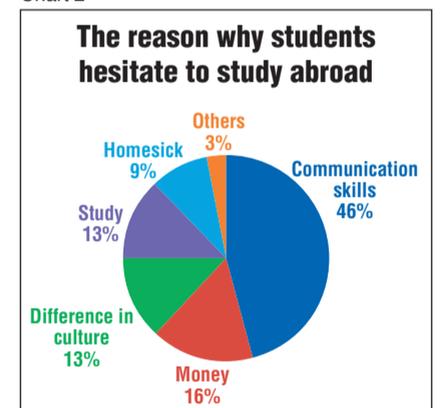


Chart 2



From the survey on international exchange in Japanese high schools in 2011 conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Questionnaires to one class per one grade in Toshimagaoka in 2016)

## TOSHIMAGAOKA TIMES

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**Staff Writers:** Satomi Kishi, Yumi Sato, Mai Taira, Chihiro Matsuda, Chika Ezure, Rina Mitani, Kotori Mawatari, Haruka Otsuki, Moegi Ono, Mizuki Kagawa, Riho Kutsumizu, Chie So, Ririka Morita, Miki Yoshida, Midori Yuki, Nanako Kitano and Rena Muto

**Contact:** 1-25-22 Higashi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo 〒170-0013  
Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen



The cherry trees given by Toshimagaoka at Dio