

## **Ama City International Association (ACIA)**

The three municipalities that were recently merged into Ama City were involved in an international friendship project in partnership with the Republic of Mali, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and the Republic of Azerbaijan during Expo 2005 Aichi, which exposed attending citizens to the traditional cultures of these countries, which until then had been entirely foreign to them. This brought them many new discoveries, surprises, and inspirations.

Against this backdrop, in May 2008, the Jimokuji-cho International Association was established to promote international exchange activities, and was renamed the “Ama City International Association” (ACIA), following the merger of the Shippo-cho, Miwa-cho, and Jimokuji-cho municipalities into Ama City in March 2010. The ACIA, as a civil organization working toward increasing multicultural awareness, has since been playing a leading role in increasing the international involvement of the city through citizen-government cooperation.

As of November 2010, a total of 1,547 foreign residents from 17 countries are registered in Ama City. To ensure that these foreign residents feel the least inconvenience when living in the city, various forms of support should be provided, including: offering translation/interpretation services; assisting them in disaster preparedness; offering information on medical services/other information necessary for living in the city; and ensuring the protection of their human rights. Remaining faithful to the philosophy of the friendship project of Expo 2005 Aichi, the ACIA is committed to creating a safe and caring community by working in close cooperation with foreign residents with diverse cultural backgrounds, while promoting international exchange and fostering international understanding. The ACIA looks forward to your participation in its activities, in which citizens play a leading role.

### **Outline of ACIA Activities**

#### **Regular events**

- “World salon” and regular meeting: These events are open to anyone as venues to introduce global cuisine and traditional Japanese craftwork. Consultation services and information for foreign residents are also available.
- Japanese language class: Four Japanese language study courses a week are offered by volunteer teachers.
- African music (*djembe* drums) class: This class is held twice a month for children to allow them the chance to enjoy playing *djembe* drums.

#### **Annual events**

- Lecture on countries that have friendship ties with Ama City, lecture on disaster preparedness for foreign residents, summer festival, citizen convention, etc.
- Cooperation for education on international understanding: Foreign residents can be sent to elementary and junior high schools as teachers.
- Issuance of informational brochures and newsletters for international exchange
- Volunteer registration system for international exchange activities (free of charge)

### **Purposes of the ACIA**

1. To increase the international involvement of the city by promoting international exchange, enhancing

- multicultural awareness, and encouraging international understanding in cooperation with citizens
2. To create a society where Japanese citizens live in harmony and peace with foreign residents with diverse cultural backgrounds
  3. To respect cultural differences among people and promote international exchange in education, culture, sports, and business on an equal footing
  4. To foster international friendship ties with regions all around the world and contribute to sustainable global environment and world peace

Date of establishment: May 11, 2008 (as Jimokuji-cho International Association)

No. of individual members: 48      No. of registered volunteers: 60      No. of group members: 11

Advisor: Koji Murakami, Mayor of Ama

**Chairperson:** Yoshio Osumi

**Vice chairperson:** Hiroshi Kondo

Secretariat for the Ama City International Association:

c/o **Civil Cooperation Section, Planning and Policy Department**, Ama Municipal Government

18-1 Kidainui, Ama-shi, Aichi, 490-1292

## Volunteers Wanted!

We are seeking volunteers (child members and individual members) who are willing to work with the ACIA in promoting international exchange activities and who fall under any of the categories described below (please specify the number of the category you fall under in the application form).

1. People who are skilled at Japanese traditional craftwork and handiwork
2. People who are interested in Japanese/global cuisine
3. People who have specialized knowledge on the history and traditional culture of Ama City
4. People who are interested in teaching the Japanese language to foreign residents
5. People who are proficient or interested in a foreign language
6. People who are interested in starting international activities as a group (e.g., offering language services, providing assistance to developing countries, receiving foreign visitors at home (as a host family), helping foreign residents live a pleasant life)
7. People who have specialized knowledge on information technology (e.g., blogs, web sites)
8. Children and adults who are interested in African music (*djembe* drums)
9. People who are interested in making friends with foreign residents
10. People who are skilled at traditional Japanese arts (e.g., tea ceremony, flower arrangement, dancing, calligraphy, music)
11. People who have substantial foreign experience (e.g., the experience of living or traveling abroad)
12. People who like to take walks around the neighborhood
13. People who are interested in editing newsletters
14. Men with physical strength who are willing to assist with heavy-duty work

\* **For organizations and groups:** If you are already involved in international exchange activities (e.g., providing language services, deepening international understanding, offering support overseas), whether as a group or as an individual volunteer, please feel free to contact us so that we can work together as partners.

**Application for a (New/Renewed) Membership of  
the Ama City International Association**

Anyone who is interested in international exchange activities can be accepted as a member of the ACIA. Please fill out this form, send it to the secretariat by fax or postal mail, and pay the membership fee to the account shown below.

Annual membership fee from April to March of the following year: (If you join the ACIA in or after October, your membership fee is reduced by half.)

Circle the applicable number and specify the number of units you choose to pay for.

1. Child member (under 18): ¥300 per unit
2. Individual member: ¥1,000 per unit
3. Group member: ¥2,000 per unit
4. Supporting member: ¥5,000 per unit

No. of unit/units: (            )

Please wire your membership fee to:

JA Amahigashi Jimokuji Branch    Account No. 0048192

Account holder: Yoshio Osumi, **Chairperson**, Ama City International Association

Name:

Address:

TEL:

FAX:

E-mail address:

Affiliation:

If you are interested in working with the ACIA as a volunteer, please specify the number of the applicable category shown above (1-14). (You may choose two or more numbers.)

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(Your personal information is used for ACIA activities only.)