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In recent years, we have faced a whirlwind of social change. The Asian economy, for example, has grown at breathtaking speed and Asia is well on its way to becoming one of the most important regions in the world.

IATSS Forum, which began in 1985 with a focus on learning from the process of Japanese modernization, has also met the needs of the changing times. Recent forum programs have placed greater weight than before on current issues facing ASEAN countries even as we continue to look to Japan as a case study. In this way, the forum provides participants with a field for tackling such issues and for better understanding each other through its unique motto, “Thinking and Learning Together.”

At the same time, a rapid and profound shift toward globalization, not only in business and industry, but also in terms of politics, economics, the environment and even pandemic disease, has made ours a time when many issues simply cannot be resolved by any single country acting alone. In the academic world, too, such issues spill across the traditional boundaries between disciplines.

Since its inception, the IATSS Forum has pursued an extensive, interdisciplinary approach to nurturing human resources capable of contributing to the international community. In the twenty-first century, we continue to move nimbly to respond to the needs of the future, adding training to the curriculum in areas such as how to lead international, interdisciplinary meetings.

Today, about 830 alumni are active in a broad range of business, industrial, political and academic fields. Alumni associations take advantage of this occupational breadth, as well as a generational range developed over more than twenty years, as they grow ever more energetic and more firmly established within each country and across the ASEAN region.

We are especially grateful for the contributions of the lecturers, local volunteers and other parties whose clear understanding of the IATSS Forum spirit does so much to keep our program going and growing. In closing, we hope participants and alumni alike will continue to utilize the Forum as they go on to pursue their own activities and contribute to society in the nations of Southeast-Asia.

IATSS Forum Steering Committee
What is IATSS?

Since its foundation in 1974, the IATSS, which is the operating organization of IATSS Forum, has been proactive in conducting a range of activities as an international and interdisciplinary research organization specializing in transportation and transport safety. Specifically, the IATSS is conducting the following six activities:


- **Goal**: Contributing to the realization of an ideal mobile society
- **Features**: Approach: Interdisciplinary and international approach, Outputs: Practical and farsighted

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**Research**

Research is a core activity for IATSS. Members of the Association lead research projects in various fields. In their independent research activities, members and other project participants independently select their research themes in line with the aims of IATSS and taking into consideration the future needs of society.

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**Symposia**

We hold a variety of symposiums and seminars both in Japan and overseas which serve as forums where a range of people can share their concerns and deepen their discussions on transportation issues. These events provide traffic experts with opportunities to discuss with each other more deeply and share knowledge and expertise.

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**Publicity and Publications**

We publish IATSS RESEARCH internationally and IATSS Review domestically as comprehensive academic journals on transportation and transport safety. IATSS RESEARCH, an international academic journal for transportation and transport safety-related issues, is published electronically with open access twice a year in English by Elsevier Ltd.

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**Awards and Grants**

Every year we select people who have conducted excellent research and activities related to transportation and commend them through our award program that we established in 1974 to contribute to building the ideal mobile society. The IATSS Award consists of the Achievement Award, the Literature Award, and the Dissertation Award.

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**International Exchange**

We are actively arranging exchanges with various foreign organizations and experts. We also provide young researchers with opportunities for interdisciplinary and international research activities and a chance to present their research results, regardless of nationality.
What is IATSS Forum?

Introduced in 1985, the IATSS Forum is a unique presence in the Foundation. The Forum had been organized to train people to lead the future of Asia and, since its first year, had accepted a cumulative total of more than 830 trainees from the ASEAN region. The young people who completed the courses are now leaders actively involved in their respective fields in their home countries.

The roots of “forum” as a term meaning “gathering place” in ancient Rome suggest IATSS Forum’s role as a gathering place for young professionals from ASEAN and Japan. Inviting talented people from ASEAN countries to Japan for a broad range of seminars under the common theme, “Thinking and Learning Together,” the Forum is a place for participants to develop a greater understanding of their ASEAN neighbors and to address current issues facing ASEAN and Japan.

The program of IATSS Forum is developed by a diverse group of learned individuals from various fields who make up the IATSS Forum Program Committee. We invite top lecturers from academia and industry. Specific issues addressed in each session vary to meet the needs of the times. But our commitment is to focus not so much on in-depth research in a particular field as on the liberal arts skills required to become young leaders.

History

IATSS Forum was established in 1985 through a personal grant from Soichiro Honda, and Takeo Fujisawa, the founders of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. The first IATSS Forum Program was held in September 1985 with participants from Malaysia. As of November 2011, a total of 48 IATSS Forum Programs have been held. Programs originally included participants from only a single country, but beginning in 1991 the IATSS Forum Program became an ASEAN Forum, with young people from several nations taking part at the same time. About 830 participants have completed Programs over the last 28 years. Today we invite about twenty young people from ASEAN countries and Japan to Suzuki City for the 55-day Forum Program.
Our Principles

The IATSS Forum is a Leadership Program

IATSS Forum is not a program designed simply to learn something new or experience Japan as a foreign culture. Its objective is strictly to “train people to become the next-generation leaders of Asia.” We define the leadership skill needed to achieve this objective as “the capability to mobilize the strengths of a group to the maximum in order to achieve the goal.” We hope to train as many people as possible to be able to build this capability, utilize the expertise of the group as a whole without waste and to become true leaders able to advance forward toward the realization of the goal.

How the Forum Defines “Leader”:
Someone who can maximize the group’s potential in working to achieve common goals.

Ideal Teammates for Improving Leadership Skills

The IATSS Forum provides an ideal environment for such leadership training. The participants of the Forum are people of different nationalities, coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds. They are prospective leaders of Asia expected to become active players in government organizations, research institutes, business enterprises and other sectors. As you yourself are a specialist in a field, other participants are similarly specialists in theirs. And people from these different backgrounds are to form groups to learn from each other regarding problem awareness and approach to issues in each of their respective fields, dig deep into their discussions, move toward a single goal and arrive at the best possible answer. All of the programs in the Forum are organized under this concept. Our greatest objective is to have each participant refine his or her leadership qualities and learn the methodologies with an international and interdisciplinary approach.

Programs are Designed to Support You

For this reason, all of the programs are founded on “participant-centeredness.” We place the greatest respect on the independence of the participants and expect them to build and develop the programs themselves, providing solid support in their activities.

Mindset the Forum Requires:

— Understand that it is participants themselves who actually create the program.
— Each individual bears responsibility for the activities of the team as a whole.
— Focus not only on the accumulation of knowledge but also on utilizing one’s own knowledge and experience in discovering and solving issues.
The Forum offers programs in the following four categories and organizes schedules for programs that last 55 days. These programs are designed not only to build leadership through exchange and discussion on themes pertaining to problems in the ASEAN region, Japan and the world at large, but also to acquire basic knowledge in the various fields and learn methodologies to the interdisciplinary approach to issues. Additionally, various exchange events are being organized to foster understanding also of Japanese society and culture through a range of hands-on experience.

Group Study

Learning to draw the potential of diversity to its maximum

►Objective► Unlike school, the Forum is not a place to compete for individual marks. The Forum is a place for co-creation, where participants each give their best, influencing each other in a cooperative process that stretches the self and raises group performance. The theme is merely material employed for this objective. The process of collaboration in arriving at the result is what is important. This program is aimed at learning the importance of the process through practice.

►Description► Group Study provides participants with an opportunity to do research and propose a group solution to an allotted topic such as human rights, gender issues, social security, etc., while carrying out the IATSS Forum motto, “Thinking and Learning Together.” Unlike in the Seminar Group Discussion, all the members of a team focus on only one topic from their different perspectives throughout the program. Therefore, we expect that participants will provide not only tangible research results, but also be able to improve their interpersonal skills through the process of study.

Seminars and Field Study

Examining social and international themes from a multilateral perspective, employing Japanese examples

►Objective► To become outstanding leaders, it is important to acquire basic knowledge of each field and at the same time to gain understanding of the viewpoints, way of thinking, ideas, etc., in each field and to learn how to interlink them cohesively. The Seminars are designed for study of basic knowledge in social issues in Japan and other Asian nations by looking into such issues and successful case studies, to explore deeper through discussions and to cultivate a multifaceted perspective and problem awareness in problem-solving. The Field Study program features visits to business enterprises and local governments to gain firsthand knowledge of the problems and strengths found in Japan and to gain a deeper grasp of the current conditions.

►Description► In Seminars and Field Study, such topics as educations, politic, industrial technology, Japanese culture, and international cooperation are covered. Through these sessions, participants can gain a balanced perspective on Japan, Southeast Asia and the world. Seminars are opportunities for the participants to deepen their understanding toward each topic through exchanges of opinions in group discussions with fellow participants, and question-and-answer sessions with the lecturers. Scholars from noted universities and business leaders from major Japanese companies offer stimulating lectures on a variety of topics. Through the Field Study, participants deepen their understanding and knowledge of each field by visiting places and institutions related to the Seminar.
**Study Tours**

To experience the core of Japanese society that is founded on versatility and diversity

**Objective** Study Tours are organized to aid participants in gaining firsthand experience of Japan’s culture, society, industry, etc., and a deeper understanding that is not possible with knowledge through books. This program includes an “individual tour” in which each participant is able to arrange his or her own study tour schedule. This program places importance on participant independence and encourages the person to act independently, in order to deepen his or her understanding of Japanese transportation and social systems and to boost their planning skills.

**Description** In order to give participants the broadest possible understanding of Japan in the shortest time, the IATSS Forum provides participants with opportunities to visit Nara, Kyoto, Tokyo and other cities. Participants gain first-hand knowledge of Japan through these visits, learn about the current challenges, and deepen their understanding of the country as a whole. Participants also have opportunities to plan their whole day trips individually by gathering information about transportation and the places they are interested in visiting, such as historical and cultural sites, museums, and universities.

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**International Exchange**

To discover common ground and differences in culture through a variety of exchange events

**Objective** The programs include various cultural exchange events with local community volunteers and other communities. This is aimed at creating opportunities for direct dialogue, interacting and presenting their own respective cultures and practices to boost greater mutual understanding, as well as opportunities for all participants to plan, organize and manage events within a limited period of time, despite language, cultural and other barriers, to learn how to exercise leadership and membership in an environment of diversity.

**Description** Participants will have many opportunities to meet people from the Suzuka area and other cities. Participants can also enjoy a variety of cultural exchange activities, including introductions to Japanese culture, homestays, and a Cultural-Exchange Day. Participants visiting other cities have the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities specific to each region and can meet people from many walks of life, including local businesses, non-profit organizations, local government officials, teachers and students. These activities are designed to provide each participant with a unique experience.
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*As of year 2008  Program content is subject to change without prior notice.*
Learning about Japan’s society, culture, history and industry in the best possible location

IATSS Forum facilities and accommodation are located in the city of Suzuka, Mie Prefecture, in central Japan. The city is conveniently situated about 50 km south of Nagoya, about 40 minutes away by train. This area is known as one of the leading commercial and industrial areas of Japan, with leading businesses in various industries located there. In the outlying areas are sightseeing spots known for their scenic beauty along the Pacific Ocean coast, as well as historic cultural properties such as Ise Shrine located near such spots. Located in this area of many advantages, IATSS Forum is found on the premises of the Suzuka Circuit, the Mobility Theme Park, known for hosting various Formula One races and is situated at a vantage point for the study of Japan’s society, culture, history and industry.
Offering a comfortable study environment with extensive facilities

IATSS Forum facilities are designed to provide a comfortable environment for participants both in study and in everyday living. Facilities include a seminar hall, computer room, cafeteria, library, recreation room, laundry room, kitchen, and prayer room. Participants enjoy private rooms and on weekends can take advantage of nearby amenities such as tennis courts and an indoor swimming pool and spa. Participants are expected to work on upgrading leadership skills for the future and at the same time interact closely and extensively with others from different backgrounds through time spent living together during the program.

Collaborating with Mie Prefecture

IATSS Forum is also engaged in local activities, including international exchange programs in cooperation with the local government of Mie Prefecture. The symbol of the Forum (illustration) is based on the Jingu Cedar, the prefectural tree, with the three trees representing the kanji 三 in the name Mie. This symbol has gained wide recognition as representing the Forum and has been created in the hope that the young people of ASEAN nations will engage in “Thinking and Learning Together” in the Forum and make great achievements in the future.
Alumni Activities

After completing the program, participants foster ties with Forum alumni in their home countries and contribute to society.

After completing the IATSS Forum program, participants return to their home countries as leaders and apply their experiences from the forum to their work in a variety of fields. At the same time, they become IATSS Forum Alumni Association members in their home countries. These organizations offer them a place to continue sharing their wealth of experience through alumni networks that span a broad range of ages and occupational fields.

Active alumni associations in each country provide opportunities for alumni to get together and exchange the latest information from various fields. Alumni activities also include informational sessions for prospective applicants and social action programs such as English lessons or traffic safety education for children. International Alumni Meetings, which take place in a different country every other year, provide an opportunity for representatives from each country's alumni association, not only to report on their activities, but also to engage in a lively exchange of views on recent issues that concern them.

Japanese Volunteer Study Tours

Deeper mutual understanding and closer human ties by meeting once again

Forum participants have many opportunities to interact with volunteers during their stay in Japan, and such interaction continues following their return home through activities that include Japanese Volunteer study tours. These tours take volunteers to visit alumni associations in various countries for home stays, workplace tours and sightseeing at cultural heritage sites, giving many Japanese a chance to gain a deeper understanding of ASEAN nations and their cultures. Such spirited alumni activities are made possible by the strong, rich network of the over 830 alumni from diverse backgrounds that the IATSS Forum has produced over its history covering almost a quarter of a century.
Operating Organizations

The IATSS Forum is managed by the following committees.

IATSS Forum Steering Committee
The IATSS Forum Steering Committee comprises the main members of IATSS. The Committee plans and implements forum policy and programs, serves as liaison with related government offices and foreign countries, and administers IATSS Forum as a whole.

IATSS Forum Program Committee
This committee is made up of people with particular experience or academic standing from a variety of fields. Its duties include devising programs according to the needs of each participating country in Southeast Asia.

IATSS Forum Country Committee
These committees operate in each participating country in Southeast Asia, and consist of forward-looking representatives from many walks of life. Activities of the committee include recruiting and selecting participants, orientation prior to their departure, public relations, and various on-site services in each country.

IATSS Forum International Advisory Committee
This committee comprises the chairman of the IATSS Forum Country Committee and the main members of the IATSS Forum Steering Committee. It advises the IATSS Forum Steering Committee on the administration of IATSS Forum from a medium- to long-term global perspective.

Glowing Friendship and mutual understanding through the shared experience
Messages from the Participants

As we are ASEAN countries and we can not stand alone as the world is changing, not just only politically, economically, culturally, but also environmentally. From this perspective, that’s why the IATSS Forum in Japan was established in order to gather all ASEAN members to meet and share what is happening in each country. It was very good for me to meet all ASEAN friends in Japan during my time at the IATSS Forum.

I would say that with the different Topics of each Seminar during the forum, it was a very useful and meaningful experience to our life and work. I have gained tremendously from the Seminars both from Japan and in ASEAN countries.

When I went back to my country, I was able to utilize the knowledge that I gained from the Forum in my work place and I have developed myself to be better in my life and work. Thanks so much for the IATSS Forum that helped me to change my life. And I hope that for next batch will learn more than I did.

“Prime opportunity to meet and study together with friends from other ASEAN nations”

Kimsour Iv
Executive Director at I2K Trading
Batch: the 29th IATSS Forum (2001)

Cambodia

“Experience at IATSS Forum stimulated greater incentive to learn”

Devi Femina
Trainee at PPM Management
Postgraduate student at University of Manchester, UK (since October 2011)
Batch: the 24th IATSS Forum (1996)

I considered my time in Suzuka is one of the best moment of my life. At that time Vietnam just joined the Forum aside from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines. It’s interesting to work together with people with diverse backgrounds in a group study. As a group, we had lengthy discussion on the alternative topics before deciding on a certain topic. We looked for references and planned the survey. We executed the plan, wrote and presented the results in Tokyo. We did have arguments and disagreements, but it’s for the better results. We learnt to listen to each other and respect other member of the group. We learnt to divide the job and trust the people who had the responsibility. I realized also the similarities on some of traditions, food or languages.

The lessons from doing the group study together tend to assist me in continuing my study abroad a year after returning from IATSS Forum. It also supported my job after coming home from IATSS and built the networks in ASEAN and Japan. The healthy arguments and conflict management experienced in the group study are my reference to handle clients, coworkers and even the superior (boss). I got used to work in a team and listen to the opinions of each member and to understand different ways of thinking. Because of IATSS Forum, I have some best friends until now. Because of IATSS Forum, Indonesian alumni have an education program for kindergarten children. I always treasure the memory and the lessons from IATSS Forum.
The IATSS Forum is a program for young people from 9 ASEAN countries, together with Japanese participants, to learn to exchange and to share lessons and experiences from one another for 55 days. As a 39th batch participant, I would like to share one aspect of the many topics contained in this program with you, namely, the Cultural Exchange Day. It is a day which all participants share their culture through performing traditional dances or singing traditional songs. In addition, many Japanese volunteers, host families and the general public are also able to participate in the dance performance or the singing. There is also a display of traditional handicrafts, food items to try, pictures of cultural places and cultural games played by each country’s booth. Finally, there is an auction of souvenir items from all participating countries and the money received from this auction is given to one particular country for implementing activities upon their return home. For the 39th batch, this money was given to Laos by a majority of votes of participants and spent helping persons with disabilities (PWD’s) in Laos. For instance, my co-participant who was also in the 39th batch used this money to buy some food items and necessary daily-use items for the Taminiay self-help group of PWD’s.

In conclusion, the IATSS Forum has contributed a lot to my learning, thinking and career development. It is a great opportunity that built a very significant and fundamental foundation for me to improve both my personal and professional life. I would very much encourage you all to be part of this valuable program by applying for this program to get the first hand experience that will make a different to your lives.

“More people should participate and experience the IATSS Forum”

Bounphamith Somvichith
Technical Officer for Elderly and Disability Management at Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

“Benefits of IATSS Forum last long after attending the forum”

Faren Ali
Management Consultant at SAKS Consulting

Why are IATSS Forum participants smiling? The forum is a unique, a life experience for some of its participants. To attend the forum is to be part of a South East Asian and Japan fellowship that last beyond the 55 days in Japan. I will never forget the smiles of the IATSS Forum participants in all the forum activities. I found this one thing in common in every batch not just here in Malaysia but in all the previous forum members I have met. For most of the participants, the forum is a unique life experience, life changing for a few. Many within my batch, the 39th batch, went on to excel in their chosen careers, pursued further studies and even found their life partners after the forum.

To attend the forum is to be part of a fellowship, a group from South East Asian nations and Japan, which lasts well beyond the 55 days. I feel that the IATSS Forum’s alumni members have a great opportunity to connect personally with fellow alumni from all batches, new and old, in the region. In Malaysia, despite participating in the forum for over 25 years, the alumni are still a close knit group with about 150 members. Many people have asked me this question, “How does one relate to other IATSS Forum alumni who have different professions and come from different batches? Surely there is little in common with alumni from 20 batches earlier”. With a smile, I always answer “It is like meeting an old friend you haven’t met in years. It is always nice to meet an old friend, especially one that shares the IATSS Forum experience”
I was really excited to participate in the 33rd IATSS Forum and I still have very fresh memories of my experience at the IATSS Forum. In my personal opinion, it is impossible to find another program like the IATSS Forum which includes so much information about Japan.

For me, the seminars were the greatest High-Light of the Forum. The themes of the seminars covered education, politics, technology, city planning and R&D all things which helped make Japan the advanced country that it is today. We were able to learn so many things directly from very prominent professors from around Japan which we could hardly get even if we happened to study at one of Japan’s famous universities. Seminars are taken care of by different professors from different universities on related subjects. For me, listening to the lectures of professors in the morning and discussing with professors and other participants from ASEAN countries in the afternoon was a really unique experience where we were able to absorb so many different ideas from different cultural backgrounds.

There were also some very tough programs which did not even allow us to have enough sleep. This was also an unforgettable thing for me. Throughout the forum, I was compelled by circumstance to become physically and mentally strong. These physical & mental strengths made me to be a stronger performer in the business arena.

Before going to the IATSS Forum, I was managing a Travel & Tour company in Myanmar and my experience in the IATSS Forum made my horizon wider and now my business contacts have been broadened by the friends that I made at the IATSS Forum.

“Learning about Japan’s culture, society and industry through the Seminar”

Thomas Kyaw Min Htin
Managing Director at Myanmar PoloStar Travels & Tours

Myanmar

I was 35 years old when I joined the Forum. It was my last chance to be chosen from amongst more than a hundred applicants around our country. Vividly, I still recall my reply to the Panel of Interviewers, when they asked me, “why do you think you should join the Forum?” With all the confidence I can muster, I said:

“Modesty aside, I am the best applicant you can take into the Forum. I am a Theater Manager in a Government-controlled Corporation (that is the Cultural Center of the Philippines), an academic (teaching Psychology part-time at the De La sale University-Manila) and a Human Resource Management Consultant (to a number of private companies)! In short, I represent all three areas (Government, academic/school and private sector) in one sweep; which means, I can contribute much knowledge and experience to fruitfully participate in the Forum.”

Surely, I was not the best and the brightest; especially, when I joined 12 other ASEAN participants to the Forum. Some of them were teachers, another was from the Police Ministry, a Judge, a computer software engineer, a researcher, and so on. But precisely, because of this mix of talents, we formed friendships and exchanged ideas in what later turned out to be 55 days of “thinking and learning together”; understanding each other’s unique personalities and cultures, under the guidance of the Forum program staff and volunteers and the crisp autumn air of Japan. After leaving Japan, I remain active in the IATSS Forum Alumni network; and, currently, the President of the Philippines’ Alumni. I also found, in the Forum, my wife (ANA PRISCILLA MABAG from Batch 31st, 2002); but that’s another story.

“Experience at IATSS Forum led to development of my subsequent career”

Mauro Ariel Sta. Rita Yonzon
Associate Artistic Director at Cultural Center of the Philippines
Batch: the 29th IATSS Forum (2001)

The Philippines
It has been a great experience being an IATSS Forum participant. I can still remember very clearly the wonderful time that I have spent with all my fellow participants from the different countries.

Besides the fun that we had, we also managed to learn a lot during the 55 days. We learnt about the cultural aspect of Japan, including the language, food, traditional costume, arts such as the Noh performance, tea ceremony and origami. We also had lots of opportunities to communicate with the delegates from not just ASEAN, but also the local Japanese IATSS Forum staff and homestay families. This has greatly helped enhanced our understanding of the different cultures in ASEAN and Japan.

We also completed a very meaningful group study project during the IATSS Forum. My group study team, which consisted of 5 other IATSS delegates from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, did a group study project on free trade agreements (FTAs). Our project title was “Do FTAs contribute to more active ASEAN economies in Trade of Services – Labour Market?” As such, we were given the opportunity to understand more about the FTA progress in ASEAN, labour force profiles of the different ASEAN countries, as well as the impact of FTAs on the various ASEAN economies as a result of labour movements.

In addition, I have since participated in 2 alumni meetings in Manila and Siem Reap. I must say it is really an honour to once have been IATSS Forum participant. The inspiring and enjoyable experience has not just broadened my horizons but also widened my circle of friends in ASEAN and Japan.

“Group study deepened mutual understanding with other participants”

Sylvia Lim
Director at Excellence Link Associates

“A cultural exchange event that because my most treasured memory”

Woraphong Chaiwiratana
Managing Partner at Toyota Chaiyaphum (Yontrakarn) Part., Ltd.
Batch: the 42nd IATSS Forum (2007)

Definitely, I really enjoyed myself the whole time I was in Japan and, especially, in Suzuka that fall. Please don’t get me wrong, though. It was all about hard work, passion, dedication, with a bit of self-discipline, and, most importantly, challenging oneself to see things, think, and act differently and open-mindedly.

Even though, throughout the 57-day forum, I gained tremendously valuable experience from various kinds of activities, I would like to share with you most of all some information about the “Cultural Exchange Day,” a one-day program designed for the participants to present and exchange some interesting cultural information about their country with Japanese volunteers and guests. Of course, contributing to the Cultural Exchange Day not only gave every participant different and important roles but great opportunities to learn how to work with participants from different cultures. This also provided us motivation and passion as we all wanted to make this big event worthwhile and most enjoyable for the guests and volunteers especially the ones making the trip all the way across town to the venue in Iga City. For this event, I did things that I would never have been comfortable with such as doing somewhat difficult traditional dances, not to mention being in charge of the “Japanese Song” rehearsal session.

I still am the worst dancer and singer in the world, but I will never forget what we all did for that event along with all the fun and passion of it. The whole “Cultural Exchange Day” package has given me the most unlikely experience and it only helped to strengthen our 42nd batch ASEAN friendship along the way until today.
I came back home after attending a 56-day program at the 32nd IATSS Forum with unique experiences and food for thought. One of the activities of the program that impressed me the most was our visit to the Honda Factory in Suzuka.

The visit made me understand how an organization should be organized and led to achieve its missions and visions. The success of Honda has originated from the hard work and determination of its founders. And such successes have been maintained with much hard work and on-going innovation by its leaders and workers. When walking along the line for visitors and observing the concerted performance made by the workers in the Honda Suzuka Factory, or when looking at the thick tall tree lines that surrounded the factory (each had been planted by a employee when he/she started to work there) I felt the profound value of hard work and on-going effort. The visit also reinforced my findings of core “Japanese values” to make Japan a great success, i.e. strong team work spirit, strong desire to catch up with Western countries by the motto “Japanese spirit, Western technology”, devotion to work, strong sense of social obligations (giri and nijio), strong face and reputation saving (kao).

When returning to Vietnam, I became much more determined in setting goals and tried to inspire myself and my staff to make enduring efforts toward achieving these set goals. Because of the Forum I can now understand that leadership is of vital importance for any success.

“Visit to Honda’s Suzuka Factory: a great learning experience”

Do Minh Hoai
Deputy Director at General Directorate of Vocational Training-Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs

Today, about 830 alumni are active in a broad range of business, industrial, political and academic fields. Alumni associations take advantage of this occupational breadth, as well as a generational range developed over more than twenty years, as they grow ever more energetic and more firmly established within each country and across the ASEAN region.
Terms, Conditions, and Eligibility

Expenses
IATSS Forum pays for the round trip airfare, participation fees for the program, accommodation, and almost all food expenses, etc. Participants need to pay for their personal expenses and part of their food expenses. More detailed information regarding the burden of expense is given in the “Letter of Agreement” which will be given to successful candidates after the final screening.

Eligibility
Participants in the program must:
1) Possess the physical and mental capabilities necessary to participate fully in program activities.
2) Be no more than 35 years of age at the time of the closing date of the application.
3) Have at least two years of full-time professional job experience at the time of application and be eligible for reinstatement to his/her current position after completing the program.
4) Have sufficient English skills and cultural adaptability to live and study abroad.
5) Travel to Japan unaccompanied.

Application Procedure
1) Applications are accepted once a year,
2) Application period: from February 1 to April 30
3) Application documents: All documents are to be sent to the applicant’s Country Committee Secretary.

Selection
There are three stages to the screening process.
1) Initial Screening: (May-June)
   Examination of application documents by the IATSS Forum Country Committee
2) Second Screening: (July-September)
   Examination of application documents by the IATSS Forum Steering Committee in Japan
3) Final Screening: (October-December)
   Interview with prospective applicants by the IATSS Forum Steering Committee and the IATSS Forum Country Committee, in their country

Other terms and conditions
1) The IATSS Forum Steering Committee retains the right to make the final decision on participation in the program.
2) Only those applicants who have successfully passed screening at each stage will be contacted.
3) The IATSS Forum Steering Committee will specify participants’ arrival and departure dates. For more information please refer to our IATSS Forum website:
   http://www.iatssforum.jp/english/