

Tokyo International University of America

By Barby Dressler

In May 1989, the first group of students walked through the doors of the still-uncompleted building that housed Tokyo International University of America (TIUA), adjacent to Willamette University in Salem. TIUA was the result of collaboration between Willamette and Tokyo International University in Kawagoe, Japan, a partnership that evolved from their sister university relationship that dated to 1965.

TIUA and its one-year program, the American Studies Program (ASP) at Willamette University, were established after two decades of short-term student and faculty exchanges between the two universities. Willamette University's director of international education Richard A. Yocom, Willamette University President Jerry Hudson, and Tokyo International University (TIU) President Taizo Kaneko provided the leadership to establish the program. The program's mission is to prepare students to be global citizens who can cross national and cultural boundaries and barriers to serve as models and help build an international community.

The motto of TIU and TIUA is "Vision, Courage, Intelligence." TIUA strives to provide a unique and rewarding intercultural educational environment for all students at Willamette University.

Approximately 120 students enroll each year in the program, which includes English language and subject-area courses such as American Society, American History, International Politics, Volunteerism, and American Culture through Art and Music. Many co-curricular programs provide opportunities for community outreach and service learning. ASP students live in Willamette University's residence halls.

Each year, students perform a combined 10,000 hours of volunteer service. Many of the service activities are carried out jointly with Willamette University students in cooperation with organizations that work with youth, the elderly, the homeless, migrant communities, and local neighborhoods. Students also contribute their talents to cultural and community events in Salem and Portland.

In 2006, the original building was expanded and remodeled, and Kaneko Commons now houses 375 Willamette and ASP students. As of the thirtieth anniversary of the ASP in 2019, more than 3,000 students will have participated in the program.

Sources

Tokyo International University of America.<http://www.tiua.edu>.

The Oregon Encyclopedia

https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/tokyo_international_university_of_america/