

Junior High School and High School

Highest award

Tourism provides Okinawa with energy

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It has been 40 years since the reversion of Okinawa, the place we reside. Nevertheless, 74% of the US Military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa. Can we say Okinawa is fully reverted to Japan?

Okinawa is now faced by the economic inequality as compared to the mainland of Japan. In 2009, Okinawa was the 46th out of 47th in the ranking of income in all prefectures of Japan. Tourism can be vital in having a stabilized economy so that our prefecture does not need to rely on the US military base and can grow independently. For that reason, Okinawa needs to appeal its attractiveness not only to the nation, but also overseas.

In March this year, I received training in Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore is a beautiful city with many contemporary skyscrapers, but it lacks “barrier free” facilities as compared to the situation in Japan. You can see quite a number of stairs, but only very few slopes and elevators. I went upstairs on my friend’s back. I think it was very inconvenient for the elderly and disabled people. Later, we went pay a home visit to a local family. Before my arrival, the family was a bit worried about me, as they knew that I would come on a wheelchair. They were very kind and they wanted to shake hands with me. It was a happy moment without the inconvenience I imagined. We played some games and they treated us to a delicious meal of local cuisine. I experienced the connection of their hearts even though I was in a foreign country.

I would like to visit the city again as it gave me good memories even if some trouble happened. For a destination, after experiencing discovery, impression and enjoyment, repeaters and comments have multiplying effect to the development of Okinawa’s economy. Also, I think it is important to have facilities equipped to allow everyone to come. Everyday I go home by monorail after school.

I can easily ride the train by just using the remote control to raise the step. This kind of train is operated with a fixed schedule, which brings great convenience. I saw foreign visitors use the facility as well. From the aspect of tourism, I think the extension of the monorail is vital to the development of local tourism.

Okinawa is located in an easily accessible place. Expecting that more and more tourists will come to Okinawa, famous hotel brands have opened hotels in the prefecture. Tourism is a peaceful industry. When tourists enjoy their visits, Okinawa is also benefited. Okinawan are still not aware of the energy tourism can bring to us. If we can put our knowledge together and make visitors to go home with good

memories, tourism, as one of the industries in Okinawa, can have even greater potentials to be further developed.