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Hino Academy, MSCC Students Find an ‘App for That’

Twenty-seven students and staff from the Hino Technical Skills Academy of Japan visited Mid-South Community College recently, and the technology-savvy young people quickly found web-based translation applications to facilitate communication.



“We supplied students with notepads and pens because we were told to expect that our guests could read and write English better than they spoke it,” said MSCC Technical Center Counselor Linda Graham. “The amazing thing to see, however,

was both groups of students pulling out their smart phones and quickly finding language translating applications.”

Although their languages and cultures are different, the students had no trouble finding common ground.

“I enjoyed meeting the HTSA students and discovering how much they had in common with our group even though they are from an entirely different culture and way of life,” said Stephen Dorsey, a Year 2 Advanced Manufacturing student from Marion High School.

Renatia Parker, a Year 2 Advanced Manufacturing student from West Memphis High School agreed.

“Surprisingly, even though we didn’t quite understand each other’s language completely, we were still able to communicate,” she said. “This was one of the best experiences I have ever had in all my years in school.”

“I found out that we basically like the same movies, sports, games and activities,” added Chris Miller, Year 1 Machining student from WMHS.

The visit included a campus tour, PowerPoint presentations from both student groups, a barbecue luncheon, an exchange of gifts between school administrators, and student-led demonstrations in MSCC’s Workforce Technology Center. Students also exchanged gifts and email addresses at the end of the event.

The visitors arrived on campus at 10 a.m. and stayed for more than three hours. MSCC President Dr. Glen Fenter welcomed them to the college.

“It is a great privilege for us to have our friends from Hino on the Mid-South Community College campus,” Dr. Fenter said. “We always look forward to this opportunity for cultural enrichment, and we certainly appreciate our partners from the Hino Technical Skills Academy for their continuing interest in visiting our institution.”

HTSA adults who participated in the 2011 event included Mr. Kentarou Yamagishi, Principal; Mr. Sakai Yorkazu, Assistant Supervisor; Ms. Ryoko Muraoka, Assistant Manager; Mr. Mitsuaki Okeda, Assistant Supervisor; and M. Toji Nakajima, Manager.

Following the luncheon, Dr. Fenter presented Mr. Yamagishi with an aluminum plaque designed and machined by MSCC students and staff. It included a group



photograph of the students who participated.

“The first year we hosted this event, I remember very clearly that the students from Hino Academy brought a very, very nice gift to Mid-South Community

College and our students,” Dr. Fenter said before the presentation.

“We started a tradition of asking our students and instructors, particularly Kelly Bearden, Roy Germain, and others, to work on a gift that would be equally representative of the great talents and skills that many of our students are developing in our program.”

Mr. Yamagishi expressed appreciation for the gift and said, “We are so impressed. Thank you very much.” He then made a presentation to Dr. Fenter, a Japanese chess set with a Lucite board and individually-machined pieces. It was MSCC’s president’s turn to be impressed.

“Very nice, very impressive,” Dr. Fenter said. “Now we expect you to leave one of your students here to teach us how to play,” he joked.



China Mobley, a Year 2 Renewable Energy student from Earle High School, agreed with Dr. Fenter’s assessment of the present. She said she was “especially impressed with the chess board and machined chess pieces they presented us as a gift.”

Graham labeled the entire event as “a huge success. Our young men and women did an excellent job with their

presentations and demonstrations. I thought the visit went exceptionally well.”

Hino Technical Skills Academy students have visited the MSCC campus on several occasions, and MSCC reciprocated in 2009 by sending a contingent of students and staff to Japan.

MSCC’s Technical Center, which is based in the college’s Workforce Technology Center building on the North Campus, serves as a focal point for workforce education and offers college credit to high school juniors and seniors in the Crittenden County area.

All services are offered to students without charge as expenses are covered by the local school districts and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education.

For information on high school/college training and educational opportunities at the college, call MSCC's Admissions office at (870) 733-6728, email admissions@midsouthcc.edu, visit the campus at 2000 West Broadway in West Memphis, or check out the website at www.midsouthcc.edu.



