

TSUKUBA ALUMNI

Japan External Trade Organization
(JETRO)
Deputy Director, Startup Section,
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SASAGAWA Saki

Advantages of Studying at the University of Tsukuba in My Career and Life

My fascination with foreign countries began during my university days when I traveled with friends. As a member of the university tennis club, I participated in an exchange camp with Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. The School of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences was also home to many students and faculty who excelled at the international level in various sports. Witnessing their overseas tours firsthand was incredibly inspiring.

Rather than pursuing a career as an athlete, I sought other ways to contribute to the world of sports. Studying nutrition and sports medicine further fueled my ambition to work in the private sector, where I could apply my knowledge effectively. After graduation, I embarked on a career with a sporting goods manufacturer, overseeing production management in China and Vietnam. After the birth of my child, I returned to Japan and transitioned to the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). Presently, I assist Japanese start-up companies in expanding their ventures overseas, primarily in North America. My role involves connecting them with local mentors and facilitating their growth through financing and other essential supports.

My Fondest Memories as a Student

Living in the dormitory was an unforgettable experience. In freshman and sophomore year, the joy of always having friends around and sharing daily life was immensely enjoyable. Club activities also played a significant role



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in my student life. After practice, we would all rush to the bathroom before it closed, creating lasting memories with even the smallest moments.

One of my classmates was TANIMOTO Ayumi, a judo athlete, and we shared a close friendship. During gym class, her expert throws made me feel like I was floating through the air. Later, she achieved an Olympic gold medal, and I felt immense pride in being part of the same university as such an extraordinary individual. Meanwhile, casual conversations with top-class athletes and coaches added a unique charm to my university experience.

Message to Students of the University of Tsukuba

The University of Tsukuba offers a remarkable environment for making connections. I encourage you to meet diverse individuals, build relationships, and cherish them. The vast campus brings together students from various fields, creating a unique opportunity to enjoy your time there.

Although I was part of the School of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences, I also had the chance to take classes in other departments. As a student, I did not fully appreciate these opportunities, which I now see as a missed chance. I urge you to make the most of these experiences and absorb as much knowledge as possible.

PROFILE SASAGAWA Saki

Ibaraki Prefecture/Graduated from the School of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences in 2004/Deputy Director, Startup Section, Innovation Department, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

