

Asubito Fukushima

~ Building Fukushima's Future

Team #6, Journalism School, FY2023, covering Asubito Fukushima



About the title "Asubito"

"Asubito" embodies the desire to cultivate individuals who will shape the future.

Mr. Hangai, the founder and representative of the organization.

Preserving the "Chain of Admirations"

Supporting Revitalization and Fostering Talent

On August 3, our team interviewed the organization "Asubito Fukushima (General Incorporated Association)," which is dedicated to fostering human resources. With the hope of nurturing talents contributing to the revitalization of Fukushima, the organization provides future-oriented experiential learning on renewable energy and other subjects for elementary and junior-high school students. They also offer various programs tailored to high school students, university students, and individuals in the general workforce, addressing different age groups. Ms. Mariko Okisawa, the leader of the Asubito Fukushima's Next



The object of electrical outlets on the premises: contemplating beyond electricity.

Generation Development Team, who participated in the interview, expresses a desire for individuals who will bring vitality to Fukushima.

Asubito Fukushima started its operations in 2013 in Minamisoma City. The founder, Representative Director Eiju Hangai, is a native of Minamisoma City and served as a board member at Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) until 2010.

After the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, Representative Hangai engaged in activities delivering aid supplies to Minamisoma City. Prompted by a conversation with a female acquaintance from a confectionery shop about the need to create a beneficial system for local children, he thought about what could be done for the remaining children. Fueled by a sense of atonement as a former TEPCO employee, he initiated talent development through experiential learning. In 2013, he established the Minamisoma Solar Agri-Park (now Asubito Park) and began his activities.

The staff consists of seven members, including the founder, four em-



Our team of elementary and junior-high school students receives an explanation about a hydrogen-powered car using hydrogen energy.

ployees, and individuals dispatched from companies such as JTB and Sumitomo Corporation, connected through corporate training. In maintaining its operations, "the aspiration is to be socially conscious, while the structure is oriented towards business"

The activities include experiential learning on renewable energy, such as drones and hydrogen cars, as well as talent development through high school student-led reporting and information dissemination. Asubito Fukushima covers all costs, including extracurricular learning expenses. (Nori Shojo, Itsuki Honda)

Encouraging Children to Gain Diverse Experiences

Asubito Fukushima, Next Generation Development Team Leader
Ms. Mariko Okisawa

We interviewed Ms. Mariko Okisawa, working as the Next Generation Development Team Leader, about the purpose and passion behind the activities.

Q: What kind of sentiments guide your talent development efforts?

A: A child's place of learning is not limited to school studies alone. That's why I want many people to have various experiences here. I hope that individuals who want to contribute to the revitalization of Fukushima will emerge from the participants in our activities. I wish for them to become role models for their juniors, anticipating the continuation of a "chain of admirations."

High School Students Interviewing Fukushima Residents

The Asubito Fukushima's high school training program offers support in a co-participatory manner. High school students actively engage in the initiative titled "People's Stories of Fukushima Told by High School Students." Another aspect is the "High School Student-Generated Role Models" project. Students interview remarkable individuals in their vicinity, becoming aware of the allure of the local community. The logo of the same organization is designed with the concept of "志" (meaning aspiration or determination in Japanese). High school students reflect on the meaning of "志" and mutually elevate their aspirations. (Seiji Watanabe)



Booklets created by high school students.



This newspaper was created by:

Nori Shojo (Aizugakuho Junior High, 3rd year)
Itsuki Honda (Iwase Junior High, 1st year)
Sachi Tozawa (Odakura Elementary, 6th grade)
Haruto Ishii (Tomita-higashi Elementary, 6th grade)
Tamaki Sato (Elementary School attached to Fukushima University, 5th grade)
Seiji Watanabe (Ishikawa Elementary, 5th grade)

Q: What is the most fulfilling moment in the course of your activities?

A: The most fulfilling moment is when people say, "I want to come back" or "This region (Coastal Hamadori) is fascinating." In the future, we aim to expand our activities not only within the prefecture but also to other regions, and eventually, we hope to extend our reach internationally.

Q: What are the challenges ahead?

A: The name "Asubito Fukushima" isn't well known among young people yet. Therefore, in the future, we want to increase awareness among the younger generation and expand our talent development activities. With a small staff of seven, it's a challenge to accommodate large groups. Creative solutions will be necessary to increase staff and host training organizations. We aim to create more opportunities for people to learn about us and provide a better platform for experiences. (Sachi Tozawa, Tamaki Sato)



"Do your best with what's in front of you, and you won't regret it. Expressing gratitude enriches human relationships."
- Ms. Okisawa

Editor's Note:

At the Asubito Fukushima facility, there is a space called "Asubito Park" that resembles a university's tiered classroom. This area embodies Representative Hangai's desire for elementary and middle school students to experience the atmosphere of a university. I was deeply moved by the wholehearted support provided to students who seek new experiences and knowledge. Some students even expressed that the activities became a part of their future textbooks. Through these initiatives, it is likely that more students with such sentiments will emerge, contributing to the realization of Ms. Okisawa's wish to see an increase in individuals dedicated to revitalizing Fukushima. Asubito Fukushima will continue to create an environment that expands the future options for students, providing support to propel the progress of recovery in Fukushima. (Nori Shojo)