Juntendo University’s Joint Efforts in Omotenashi—Hospitality for Team USA
Training Camp ahead of the IAAF World Championships, Beijing 2015

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As a preparatory step for the 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo, Juntendo University, in collaboration with Chiba Prefecture, successfully invited the United States National Team, and helped organize their training camp ahead of the World Athletics Championships in Beijing. This was made possible by cooperating with local communities as well as different faculties within the university. The success of the project clearly demonstrated, both in and outside Japan, the potential of Juntendo University in offering a “campsite with an international perspective and readiness.” Efforts in globalizing Juntendo sports are being carried out by integrating expertise in Juntendo University’s sports science, medicine, nursing, and international liberal arts.

Key words: 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics, pre-event campsites, collaboration among faculties, collaboration with local communities, globalization

Successful promotional activities for a pre-event training camp

Prior to participating in the World Athletics Championships in Beijing held in August 2015, the United States National Team, with approximately 200 athletes and coaches, held a pre-event training camp using the Juntendo University Sakura Campus, along with Nakadai Athletic Stadium in Narita City and facilities in Sakura City. A large number of prefectures in Japan, as well as other countries, had competed for hosting Team USA, one of the most powerful teams in the world. Juntendo University, taking advantage of its unique expertise, and in cooperation with adjacent cities, effectively performed promotional activities led by Chiba Prefecture. This kind of success, realized by a prefecture–city–university consortium, could be considered an innovative and feasible approach in light of the 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo.

Table-1 lists Japanese cities, which successfully invited national teams from other countries as their training camps ahead of the 2015 World Athletics Championships in Beijing. Juntendo was the only university that pulled off hosting a training camp. Thanks to Team USA’s choice for their pre-event training, we were able to show both nationally and internationally that Sakura Campus is highly appraised for its excellent facility in various aspects, including its functions and safety.

Collaborative effort

Juntendo students supported Team USA during their stay with the following volunteer work: graduate students in the Graduate School of Health and Sports Science helped manage the pre-event training camp, undergraduates in the Faculty of Health and Sports Science supported athletes and trainers in individual training sessions, and freshman students in the Faculty of International Liberal Arts (FILA) mediated intercultural communication as 
interpreters. The volunteer interpreters sent from FILA, newly established in April 2015, received interpreting training in preparation for the task.

Regarding liaison with local communities, Juntendo University created collaborative arrangements with Chiba Prefecture, Inzai City, Narita City, and Sakura City. For example, Inzai City, where the university is located, offered facility arrangements and financial support to manage the training camp, in addition to an original welcome board for the team (see Figure-1).

An international athletic event “Juntendo International 2015” was held, in cooperation with Inzai City, on Sakura Campus of the Faculty of Health and Sports Science. Athletes from not only the Japan National Team but from different national teams, camping in Japan, participated, such as those from the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. It is unprecedented that one university held such an international athletic meet, and it is noteworthy that the student volunteers in the Faculty of Health and Sports Science and the Faculty of International Liberal Arts also worked for this international event. In addition, Juntendo student volunteers supported other activities as well, such as running programs organized by some Olympic athletes for elementary school children living in the city, and relay races for junior high school students living in Inzai, Sakura, and Narita cities, providing them with opportunities to observe performances by world-class athletes.

For globalizing Juntendo sports

Juntendo University’s efforts in hosting this year’s pre-event training camp, as well as international athletic meet, solidified the basis for globalizing Juntendo sports. With the ultimate goal set for the 2020 Summer Olympics and Paralympics, the Faculty of Health and Sports Science collaborated with Juntendo Medical School, six university hospitals, two nursing schools, and the Faculty of International Liberal Arts, demonstrating its advantage as a training camp site equipped with an international mindset. At the same time, Juntendo was able to show that it takes pride in offering omotenashi, based on Juntendo’s traditional spirit of hospitality “Jin,” in the field of sports.

Juntendo University will continue its endeavor in pursuing globalization of sports by integrating efforts jointly made by schools and faculties in medicine, sport sciences, nursing, and international liberal arts.