

Greetings from the President's Office

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Learn from the Champion to Establish the 'Self'

The Rugby World Cup, which was held for the first time in Japan, ended up being much more exciting than expected. Prior to the World Cup, the Fiji National team set up their training camp in Akita city, and I heard that many rugby fans went to see them practicing. Akita actually used to have strong and prestigious rugby teams, such as the Prefectural Akita Technical High School Rugby team with their 15 championship titles.

The South African team became world champions by defeating England in the final, which brought AIU a great deal of joy because two of our students, Tsuyoshi Enokida and Joshu Westbrook, were working as the South African team's interpreter and regional manager. They obtained this position after a competitive screening process on various skills, expertise, and understanding of rugby, as well as their language skills. They did not know which team they would be assigned to at the time.

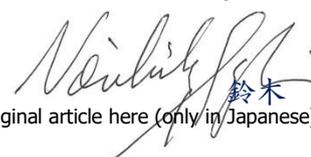
During the World Cup, Mr. Enokida and Mr. Westbrook accompanied the South African team everywhere and at all times, assisting more than 50 players and staff. They performed a wide range of duties, from translating to driving their bus and all the players and staff expressed their appreciation for their dedication afterwards. Rugby is a national sport in South Africa and everyone in the country is very passionate about it, in particular, all of the team members were truly professional.

In the world of sports, stereotypical characteristics such as self-centered and selfish may come to mind when thinking of elite professional athletes. However, the two students had a great impression on the athletes' positive and respectful attitude, such as the Head Coach and players asking for advice on how to communicate and greet the Japanese fans. Most players get extremely tense while practicing and playing, but on the contrary, the South African players looked very relaxed and were joking all the time. Their ability to mentally turn "on" and "off" was especially impressive.

The team has one and only one rule, to behave liberally and to let each player's individuality shine as long as it does not bring any trouble to the team. This overlaps to some extent with our university's educational goal, to establish the 'self,' and for others to have understanding with compassion.

Mr. Enokida and Mr. Westbrook stopped by my office after they returned to AIU from the World Cup and shared what they experienced and accomplished, as mentioned earlier. They also brought a memorial T-shirt full of all members' autographs on it, which is now displayed in my office and will be on display at the library shortly.

I am pleased to announce that Mr. Enokida, who served as the former captain of our rugby team, found a job at a top athlete training institution in South Africa for his experiences and expertise gained during the world cup. Mr. Westbrook has been designated as an official interpreter for the Sunwoves, a Japanese team that is playing in an international rugby union competition in the Southern Hemisphere. I am looking forward to seeing the further development and success of Mr. Enokida and Mr. Westbrook in their new stages in life.



鈴木 典比古

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<http://www.asahi.com/area/akita/articles/MTW20191224051550001.html>

President Norihiko Suzuki, DBA