CFAY Security hosts event for Kofu Kodomo-en children

Story and photos by Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Security Department hosted a community relations event with the children and workers from Kofu Kodomo-en children's home at several locations around the base July 29.

"We brought the Kofu Kodomo-en orphanage from Negishi Yokohama out to be witness to who we are as Security, CFAY Security out of the our local base here in Yokosuka," said Master at Arms 2nd Class Jeffery Gagin, event coordinator. "The plan was to show them who we are and what we do."

Security Department has been volunteering to sponsor Kofu Kodomo-en children for more then 20 years.

"We go out there for Halloween and for Christmas and last Christmas they brought up the fact that they did not really know who we were so we brought them here to show them who we really are," said Gagin.

Security spent several hours with the children and showed them where they work like the Security Headquarters building and also introduced the children to the Security chain of command.

"We toured CFAY Security headquarters including the office area and detention cell, got windshield tour of the base, enjoyed bowling, and then had barbeque all together," said Chinami Yatabe, Kofu Kodomo-en staff member."We were impressed to see huge ships, and thought the base has everything from schools to hospitals. It looks like a whole town."

Gagin said, "I think that they learned that we are regular people, we're just not some machine, we live in regular homes and we are just like them."

After the barbeque, Security personnel showed the children their vehicles and some of the equipment they use every day to keep CFAY safe. The visitors got to see the inside of a patrol van and a Humvee.

"Also, harbor security came by to do and boat show and after that we did the [military working dog] show," said Gagin. "All these types of things, interacting with the community really help us out with our relationship especially being Security it helps us to work better with the local community. All of it's good community relations that help build our relationship with Japan."

Members of Security Department remarked that the day was as much fun for them as it was for the visitors.

MA2 Brian Gamble leads military working dog Fuli by suitcases and bags as part of a contraband detection demonstration in front of children and staff from the Kofu Kodomo-en children, July 29. Security Department sponsors the orphanage during special events like gift giving at Christmas and brought them on base to see where the Security personnel work and live.

MA2 Robert Duker, CFAY Security, said "Earlier this morning we had the Commanding Officer out here and when one of the ladies was thanking the Captain she said 'This day will be one that the kids will always remember' and that stuck out to me because they can hear about Security bringing them gifts and sponsoring them and things of that nature but the fact that we brought them to this installation and gave them a day of fun, that's something these kids will remember forever."

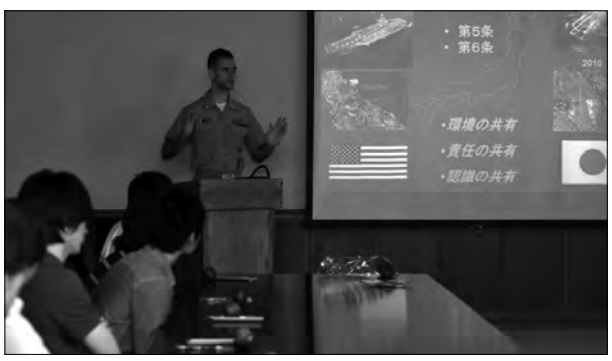
Local college students visit CFAY, learn about U.S.-Japan Treaty

Story and photo by MC3 Charles Oki, Navy Public Affairs Support Element West

Students and faculty members from Chuo University visited Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Aug. 2.

Twenty-seven students, one professor and two members of the Japanese Defense Ministry toured CFAY to gain a better understanding of the function and history of the U.S.-Japan alliance.

During the tour, the students viewed a presentation that provided background information and details of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan that was created January 1960.



Lt. Cmdr. David Wilcox makes a presentation about the U.S.-Japan alliance to students from Chuo University during a tour of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Aug. 2. The students visited CFAY to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the United States and Japan.

"One of the biggest thing I spoke about was the mission and organization of U.S. 7th Fleet and how Commander Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) works with U.S. Forces Japan and the Japanese government," said Lt. Cmdr. David Wilcox, a Cincinnati native and CNFJ bilateral coordination officer. "One of the most important parts of the presentation was showing them how Japan has an indispensable role in helping sustain U.S. Naval operations in east Asia to maintain security and stability."

Due to the secure nature of most overseas military bases, most host country nationals that live far away from bases never really know what goes on past the gates. The visit gave students a first hand look at life on a military installation.

"Because most Japanese people don't have a relationship with the bases most have misconceptions of what the bases are like," said Kouki Uchiyama, a 3rd year student at Chuo. "We all had our idea of what the base was going to be like and most of us thought you would see people learning how to fight or doing military things, but now that we're here we can see that its just like an ordinary town."

The visit also helped students learn more about how the U.S. came to help Japan in the aftermath of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami during Operation Tomodachi. During this time many opinions of the U.S. military in Japan changed said Yuko Kondo, a graduate student at Chuo.

Students from Chuo University take their photo in the lobby of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) headquarters during a base tour Aug. 2.

"Some Japanese people used to think that the U.S. was taking advantage of Japan by being here," said Kondo. "After March 11 and Operation Tomodachi, peoples perceptions changed after seeing the U.S. military respond to the disaster. The Japanese people got to see how friendly and caring the American forces were while they were helping those affected."

According to Prof. Makoto Arai, the goal was to give the students a chance to formulate their own opinions of the alliance through their own experiences rather than a textbook.

"These students only had knowledge from textbooks written by people with views that may have been negative or outdated," said Arai. "Hopefully through this visit they will be able to realize on their own how important the relationship between Japan and the U.S. is and hopefully make it better in the future."