

MAEBASHI FOCUS

Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) Newsletter



Since snowfall in Maebashi feels nothing short of miraculous, traveling up to Akagi Onuma felt like stepping into another world entirely. The landscape was blanketed in pure white, with the peak of Mt. Akagi shimmering in hoarfrost—it was truly a breathtaking sight.

The fishing itself was both fun and educational. Before trying our hand at it, we watched a demonstration by a staff member from Aomizu Ryokan, where we also rented our gear. In just ten minutes, the staff member managed to catch three wakasagi. Naturally, I assumed that meant the three of us would be swimming in fish within the hour—how wrong I was.

First up was one of the two Tourism Promotion Division members joining us. After about ten minutes, nothing. Next was the second member, who felt several bites but still came up empty-handed. Then it was my turn. Ten minutes passed—nothing. A few tugs here and there, but no fish. I had resigned myself to leaving empty-handed when, by some small miracle, I felt one last tug. I quickly reeled in the line and, to my delight, a single fish emerged. It was smaller than my pinky finger, but in that moment, it felt like I had just reeled in a bluefin tuna.

Afterward, we enjoyed a delicious lunch at Aomizu Ryokan, where the staff kindly fried all four fish caught that day—mine included.

Later in the month, on January 29th, I had the opportunity to serve as an interpreter for the Maebashi Young Leaders Program. Through this initiative, talented public administration professionals from across Asia and Europe visit Maebashi to learn how the city operates, with the aim of applying those insights in their own countries.

Howdy, y'all!

The past two months in Maebashi have been absolutely packed with activity for me. From wakasagi fishing to hosting an Italy-themed event, the new year has kicked off as a nonstop rollercoaster of excitement.

To start, I'd like to share my experience taking part in one of Gunma's beloved winter traditions: wakasagi fishing. I was honored to receive an invitation from the Tourism Promotion Division to join them at Akagi Onuma, where we took photos and filmed our outing for use in promotional materials.



It was a privilege to interpret for the mayor and assist with tours of the Maebashi Children's Library—which is truly impressive and well worth a visit for anyone with children—as well as the Fire Department. Most of all, I was grateful for the chance to meet such bright and motivated individuals from around the world.

Finally, on February 14th, I had the honor of serving as MC for an Italy-themed event at the Maebashi Central Community Center, hosted by the Maebashi International Association (MIA). It was my first time emceeding an event like this, so I was naturally a bit nervous—but thankfully, it went very well. In fact, I felt much more at ease than I had expected. The event featured a wide range of booths, from glass pens to Ferraris, and concluded with a stamp rally offering some fantastic prizes. I hope everyone who attended had a wonderful time. Thank you to MIA for giving me such an incredible opportunity!

