



Message from the President

Here at Akita University, following an extensive re-organization in 2014, we have set out on a new beginning as an organization offering four faculties: the Faculty of International Resource Sciences, the Faculty of Education and Human Studies, the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Engineering Science. As of this year, we are also organized as an integrated research facility into four graduate schools: Graduate School of International Resource Sciences, Graduate School of Education, Graduate School of Medicine and Graduate School of Engineering Science. Hence our organization has become stronger, a bastion fully focused on innovative research and education, which is the mission of the university as expected by society.

We have achieved this after a two year journey, in line with our vision: 1) to develop far-sighted leaders both for the world and the community 2) to create a future with an outlook on both the community and the wider world 3) to build a plentiful society, existing in tandem with the community 4) to aspire to a world with strong ties to the community. The foundation of this is innovative research, contributing to the world and to the community, as well as the development of the talent which can carry out this research. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, is reforming university management expense grants and has divided the National University Corporation into three groups: 1) university groups aiming to develop international-level educational and research bases 2) university groups aiming to develop national educational and research bases 3) university groups aiming to develop core bases for regional reinvigoration. The policy has outlined is based on an assessment of these different objectives. Akita University is selecting the third objective - university groups aiming to develop core bases for regional reinvigoration. Now, more than ever, there is a need for innovative research and education which makes a significant contribution to the region and the community.

In order to achieve this objective, with the University's research and education organization now in place, the first and foremost requirement is a reform of our teaching staff's approach and sense of purpose. I think that if all teaching staff are fully focused on what needs to be done in order to enhance our contribution to the community through the innovative research we do, we will make significant strides in our research and education initiatives.

This year, we have launched the Center for Regional Development because it was set up to help further the regional regeneration of Akita Prefecture, it is no exaggeration to say that the Center's activities make an absolutely critical contribution to the local community. In relation to regional cooperation, I consider the adoption of COC+ (Center of Community) to be something which makes an ever larger contribution to the region, enhancing the reputation of Akita University, in addition to the regional support initiatives already undertaken by the COC project and our Development department. In the industrial sector, we also have high expectations, and relish the opportunity of contributing to boosting the employment rate of graduates in the prefecture, and to developing local businesses through establishing research projects with links to key initiatives in Akita Prefecture.

To this end, in terms of the "reform of approach and sense of purpose" required, I think there are two important points to be made. Firstly, the Faculty of Education and Human Studies and the Regional Culture Department form part of the Regional Co-operation Department, within the Center for Regional Development. The teachers and students of the Regional Culture Department should be in no doubt of the significance of the contribution they are making to the region, by studying regional culture and increasing their depth of knowledge of Akita. The second point is the importance of the activities and workings of the Faculty of Engineering Science. Thus far, the priority placed by the university on innovative research is clearly evident from results, in respect of everyone's own field of research and education. At the same time after this, as we revisit our research innovations from the perspective of their contribution to the region, I think that flexibility will also become more important, in terms of expanding and adapting the research that we do.

If we draw strength from the results achieved by each faculty, and strive to be a university befitting our community as the regional base of learning, then our conviction that we can build Akita University as the cornerstone of the community follows on naturally from this. Let us now work towards the flawless implementation of the Mid Term Objectives and Plan.

Akita University President

Dr. Fumio Yamamoto, M.D.