

# Students' curiosity piqued by U.S. diplomats

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OSAKA — Junior high and high school students interested in studying abroad learned about the work and lives of U.S. diplomats and the experience of working overseas from three U.S. consular officers at a seminar held in Osaka on Dec. 18.

Public Affairs Officer Alicia Edwards, Consular Chief Celia Thompson, and Agricultural Trade Office Director Jeff Zimmerman, all of the U.S. Consulate General Osaka-Kobe, gave a lecture on "careers in foreign affairs" in Osaka's Kita Ward to about 70 students from 10 private high schools in and around Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe.

The event was organized by Chugaku Juken Support, a Yomiuri Shimbun website that provides support for parents and students preparing to take junior high school entrance exams.

Edwards spoke about her life and ca-



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U.S. diplomat Alicia Edwards gives a lecture to students in Osaka on Dec. 18.

reer as a diplomat. She stressed the importance of studying abroad at a young age and gave the students five recommendations: Be curious, take risks, take advantage of opportunities, find a role model, and have fun.

Thompson told the students that her family had adopted boys from El Sal-

vador when she was a child, so she was able to interact with foreigners at a young age, an experience that finally led her to a career as a diplomat.

Zimmerman compared U.S. and Japanese diets, using data to highlight some of the differences.

The 45-minute lecture was conducted entirely in English with no interpretation. Students actively participated in the subsequent 35-minute discussion session with the three officials.

Koyo Gakuin Senior High School student Shinnosuke Yagi said: "As I'm aiming to become a diplomat, today's lecture was really useful. I asked Ms. Edwards for her opinion of the U.S. government's withdrawal from the Paris agreement, and I was impressed by her answer." She told the aspiring diplomat that even though the U.S. government has withdrawn from the agreement, private U.S. companies are voluntarily introducing environmental measures.

"She turned a negative question into a positive answer," Yagi said.