



Akita International University (AIU)

CELS

起業家リーダーシップ研究育成センター

Center for Entrepreneurship and Leadership Studies for Regional Economies

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Director

On September 10, 2004 Akita International University established the Center for Entrepreneurship and Leadership Studies in Regional Economies (CELS). The Center has two aims. The first and foremost is to educate students majoring in Global Business to think – in the context of business, in creative, critical, independent, and global dimensions. These are necessary attributes for success in entrepreneurship and leadership in the global economy. The second is to engage in various activities and research related to these two themes that can be expected to contribute positively to the Tohoku regional economy. These two aims obviously are closely related.

Traditional approaches to stimulating regional economies aspire to establish industries of the future, using various government incentives. In contrast, CELS aims at a more fundamental level – the individual. Our mission is to train individuals – in particular, young individuals, to think, in the context of business, creatively, critically, independently, and globally, in the hope that individuals with entrepreneurial spirit will become the seeds from which strong regional economies will grow. Attempts will be made to inject this philosophy into the Global Business curriculum at AIU at every opportunity.

CELS provides training programs to members of the local business community. Our first training program, ‘Marunouchi Kigyō Juku in Akita’ (MKJa) started in May 2005 and ran for seven weeks. The first class of 21 ‘students’ graduated on June 24. The first training program was aimed at 30-45 year old middle-level and senior managers with potential to be CEO within 5 years. CELS also contribute to the local economy of Akita by hosting the executive seminars, where prominent Japanese and international scholars, practitioners, and government leaders in the areas of entrepreneurship and leadership are invited to give presentations on campus or at AIU’s extension campus in College Plaza in Akita city. In August 2005, CELS hosted an off-campus lecture by Mr Niwa, Chairman

of ITOCHU, one of Japan's largest general trading companies. In May 2006, CELS hosted an on-campus lecture by Mr Kouta Matsuda, one of Japan's most popular entrepreneurs and founder and CEO of Tully's Coffee Japan, one of Japan's most successful venture firms.

In July 2006, CELS will host one of the largest symposiums ever held in Japan on the subject of entrepreneurship titled 'Nurturing Entrepreneurial Habitat in Regional Economies.' See attachment.

The CELS concept directly contributes to one of the principle objectives of AIU's Global Business program - the supply of needed entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial talent, highly trained in the fundamentals of business, fluent in English, with significant global experience. This benefit will be felt over the long-term in the regional economies of Tohoku or wherever AIU graduates choose to invest their energies.

The director of the Center is Dr Mike Lacktorin, who is also director of AIU's Global Business Program and former vice president in charge of M&A and Investment Banking at Citibank Japan. Dr. Lacktorin is the first American to receive a PhD in economics from Keio University. He holds an MBA in finance from the University of Chicago. After graduating from Sophia University in 1980, he joined Nomura Securities as the first non-Japanese *seishain* (regular employee) to be employed by Nomura Securities in Japan, and for several years worked for Nomura on Wall Street where he co-founded Nomura's M&A group in the US. The following AIU faculty will play key roles at CELS: Dr Takashi Yamamoto, CELS Associate Director, Associate Professor, AIU, PhD in Economics, University of Hawaii and Masters degree, Princeton University; Mr. Hitoshi Suga, founder and former CEO of Mitsui Venture Capital and current vice chairman and board member, Tully's Coffee Japan Co., Ltd./FoodX Globe Co., Ltd; Mr. Hideya Taida, Select Professor, Akita International University, and former executive director of Marubeni Corporation and current executive vice president of the Japan Foundation.. And Dr Yeh, Assistant Professor, PhD Management, Tsukuba University.



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