

Progress

Introducing a Promising Toyo University Student

At Toyo University, many students demonstrate their outstanding talents in a wide range of fields, including scholarly and scientific research, sports, and volunteer activities. This article features an interview with Mr. Pham Quang Huy, a current student who won the silver prize in a business model contest and passed a difficult examination for a national qualification in Japan.



Pham Quang Huy

First-year student in the Master's Program, Course of Life Sciences (Environmental Engineering Laboratory), Graduate School of Life Sciences
 Winner of the Silver Prize in "freebit biz challenge COMPETE 2019," a business model contest for students
 Successful applicant for the national examination to receive Type-1 Water Pollution Control Manager Qualification

Awareness and Interests That Come from Roots

I was born in Vietnam, and grew up in Japan since coming here at age five with my parents, who are engaged in the trading business. Although I was still a small child when I came to Japan, I was surprised at the wide gap between Vietnam and Japan in terms of infrastructure, and that made me interested in environmental science. At the same time, I was influenced by my parents, who I have closely observed working since my childhood, as well as my older brother, who is running his own business. They made me interested in businesses as well.

When I was a fourth-year undergraduate student, I took up the challenges of participating in a business model contest and taking the national exam for the Pollution Control Manager Qualification. I drew on my own strengths as a person with roots in both Vietnam and Japan, and my own awareness and interest generated from my family background.



Striving to Achieve Long-Time Aspirations

I'm currently conducting research on water quality improvement together with Professor Tatsuo Sumino, my academic supervisor, at the Environmental Engineering Laboratory. An example would be the Mekong River. It runs from China through Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries to Vietnam, my homeland. Along the river, the development of water purification facilities is in progress, but still remains at an insufficient level. Water pollution can cause infectious diseases and food problems. At the Environmental Engineering Laboratory, we conduct research focused on boosting the performance of water purifiers. But we go one step further by working to solve practical issues such as development and operation costs, so that these devices can be widely used in Southeast Asia and other regions.

I have succeeded in obtaining the highest-level qualification, called Type-1 Water Pollution Control Manager Qualification. It was all thanks to the guidance that Professor Sumino had given me in preparation for the national exam for the qualification. In Japan, plants over a designated size are obligated to assign a qualified pollution control manager to measure and manage the pollution level of wastewater. Since this qualification is closely related to my subsequent research and will expand my choice of future careers, I was very happy when I passed the exam.



Competing in a Business Model Contest

When I was considering setting a future goal of starting up a business, my older brother advised me to participate in the business model contest "freebit biz challenge COMPETE 2019" to test my capabilities. In the contest, I invented CONNECT, a platform that connects people from outside Japan who are facing troubles due to language barriers to other people from outside Japan with linguistic skills.

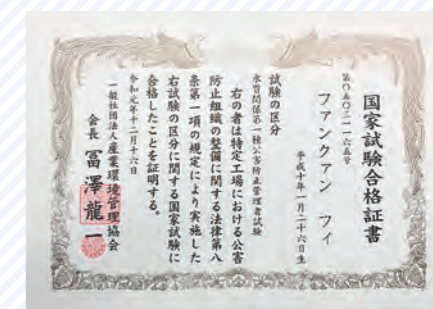
This business model is closely associated with my childhood experience. Although my parents were still unable to speak Japanese after they came to Japan, I naturally became bilingual in Vietnamese and Japanese through my student life. Therefore, I often carried out administrative and other procedures in place of my parents from my elementary school days. But such procedures were often difficult for a child to understand, so I wished someone would help me on such occasions. I have also been asked by acquaintances who had just arrived in Japan to help them in concluding a mobile phone contract. That's why I noticed that this kind of support service could be provided in business.

Since I was able to create a consistent and convincing business model based on my own experiences, I also devoted my energy to designing an appealing, inspiring presentation and materials. Although our efforts ended up with the silver prize, the result has made me believe that it was not my goal, and provided me with new motivation. If I were content with the result, I couldn't make further progress.

I'm planning to win a job at a company after completing my graduate studies, in order to accumulate further knowledge and experience to achieve my ultimate goal of starting up a business. In the future, I hope to conduct a business that connects Vietnam and Japan by applying my research achievements and strengths.



Award ceremony for the business model contest



Certificate of success in the national examination for the Pollution Control Manager Qualification