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The top 5 impressive International conventions in my mind

Participating in academic conventions held in Japan and various parts of the world is one of the tasks of university teachers. Listed below are some of the conventions most impressive to me, along with photos taken during them.

BEST 1 (Photo A)

MEMS 2008
(Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A.)

Overwhelmed by the exquisite desert, cactus and the sunset, I definitely wanted to capture the scenery like a professional cameraman. International conventions are often held in places ordinary tourists would rarely visit, which is exciting. At this convention, I met some of my colleagues at MIT, who jokingly asked, "Say, did you dye your hair white?" (laughter) Guess what happened to me during the four years at Keio...

BEST 2 (Photo B)

microTAS 2007
(Paris, France)

Usually a banquet is offered for participants during international academic society meetings, where an entertainment event distinctive to the host venue is staged (Uzumasa Movie Village's sword fighting show in Kyoto, a yodel performance in Switzerland, etc.). To our surprise, this particular convention allowed us to exclusively enjoy the Orsay Museum. What a luxury! (Photo shows the caf that served as the stage for the French movie "Amélie.")

BEST 3 (Photo C)

ICRA 98
(Leuven, Belgium)

This event was memorable because I made my first presentation ever at an international convention. As it was my very first visit to Europe, I was on the go so much that I forgot the stress for the presentation soon to be made. I walked all around town, which almost wore out the new shoes I bought at Heathrow Airport on the way. On my way back after the society convention, I visited CNRS (Centre national de la recherche scientifique) in Marseille, France. (Photo: Marseille)



BEST 4 (Photo D)

Hilton Head 2002
(Hilton Head Island, SC, U.S.A.)

This is an MEMS-related domestic convention in the United States. The most fantastic aspect of this convention is its "no necktie" rule. Japanese participants usually wear a necktie and a suit when attending conventions. But at this convention, everyone was wearing a polo shirt and shorts. Fired up and wearing a suit and tie, I was about to leave my room when a fellow participant suddenly stopped me and said "Oh no! You'll have your tie cut into pieces!" Thanks to the unusual dress code, all participants were very frank and discussing actively - regardless of whether they were teachers or students. To everyone's surprise, I won a golf tournament, an after-convention event! I kissed the championship cup in front of all of the participants (laughter).

BEST 5 (Photo E)

MEMS 2000
(SEAGAIA, Miyazaki, Japan)

Though the venue was in Japan, this event was very impressive. I could make many new friends while I helped my supervisor then organizing the conference and... a karaoke sing-along-music party! I still maintain friendly relationships with them, whom I met again recently at an international convention held in Hong Kong. At the MEMS 2001 held in Interlaken, Switzerland the following year, we went to a night club together. (Photo: Interlaken)

Out of the ranking, but ...

MJISAT 2007 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

I participated in this convention together with my colleagues, Dr. Ushiba and Dr. Hotta. In the evening, we visited a downtown open-air stall area. (Photo F)



IEEE-NEMS 2007 (Bangkok, Thailand)

This event was organized by a Thai friend with whom I became acquainted in Miyazaki. In the evening, I enjoyed Thai boxing matches with a friend from Washington University. (Photo G)