

Event

Mochitsuki (餅つき)

Tokyo Medical and Dental University (TMDU) held the 3rd Mochitsuki with Juntendo University at TMDU



TMDU and Juntendo University students, staff, and faculty at the Mochitsuki.

Tokyo Medical and Dental University (TMDU) held the third Mochitsuki (餅つき, rice cake festival) with Juntendo University at TMDU's M&D Tower on February 5, 2014. The Mochitsuki gave international students and faculty from both universities a chance to meet one another while experiencing traditional Japanese culture.

Opening remarks were given by TMDU President OHYAMA Takashi and Juntendo University CEO OGAWA Hideoki. TMDU Associate Professor OKITA Yoko gave a short talk introducing the students to the Mochitsuki. The Mochitsuki is a ceremony that involves the making of mochi, Japanese rice cakes. Making mochi requires a five step process. First, the rice must be steamed. Second, the steamed rice must be crushed. Third, the part that everyone at the event had the chance to participate in, the mochi must be pounded. Here a person pounds the mochi, the tsukite (つき手), in a usu (臼) with a kine (杵). While another person rotates the rice, the kashite (返し手), in an usu. Once pounded the mochi is ready to be shaped and prepared to eat, steps four and five.

Although the Mochitsuki is a Japanese cultural tradition, Associate



A Juntendo University international research student, the tsukite, is pounding the mochi using a kine at the Mochitsuki. The kashite, the man next to the usu, rotates the mochi.

Professor OKITA noted that other foods around the world such as fufu from the Congo require a similar process.

As the event was drawing to an end one student mentioned that he had an unforgettable time at the Mochitsuki. He enjoyed meeting people from TMDU and Juntendo University who he had never met before and experiencing first hand Japanese culture. TMDU and Juntendo University will continue to plan events with the hopes of giving more international members of both universities the same experience. ■