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## One Small Step toward Promoting Inbound Tourism: Offering Free *Shodo* Lessons to Foreign Visitors at *Ryokan Sawanoya* on September 16 & 17

Receiving full support from *Ryokan Sawanoya*, student volunteers from Toyo Gakuen University are offering free *Shodo* (Japanese calligraphy) lessons to foreign guests on September 16 and 17. This program, called “*Shodo Experience*” (冷や汗) - literally translated as a program where students learn through situations that make them break out in a cold sweat - is run by the seminar students of Ms. Kayoko Honjo, from the Faculty of Business Administration.

■**What do students do?** University students with little confidence in English teach *Shodo* to foreign tourists.

A group of students from Toyo Gakuen University are offering a “*Shodo Experience*” to foreign guests staying at *Ryokan Sawanoya*. These students have qualifications in Japanese calligraphy, but they have little confidence in speaking English. By offering a free calligraphy lesson, they are rewarded with hands-on training in using English in a real life situation, outside school. The aim of this program is to prepare students to contribute to the enhancement of inbound tourism, with an eye to the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.



■**What is so special about it?** It motivates students by having them complete a challenging task (and break out in a cold sweat).

Most students want to speak English, but it is not easy to find chances to study and use it in real situations in Japan. In this program, students are expected to make mistakes and to experience what they can and cannot do while using English with foreign tourists. The focus is not on making them demonstrate what they have studied but on providing them with the joy and sorrow of using English – providing them with a real motivation to studying it.

■**What do foreign tourists think?** “It gives us a different view of young people in Japan!”

It is also a great opportunity for foreign customers to learn *Shodo* from Japanese university students. We received very positive feedback from our trial sessions when we had our first lesson on September 1. Customers responded with comments such as: “Students are great teachers!” “I thought Japanese students are so cool!” “We want to learn more *Shodo*!” “It gives us a different view of young people in Japan.”

**When:** 8:30 p.m. ~ 10:00 p.m. on September 16 & 17

**Where:** The Dining Room at *Ryokan Sawanoya* (2-3-11 Yanaka, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0001)

**Reference information:** <http://s.ameblo.jp/honjozemi/entry-12068974288.html>