

29 August 2018

Hosting the Open House 2018, at Hiroshima and Nagasaki RERF

RERF's Open House event has become an annual tradition. Unlike RERF's standard facility tours (reservations required), each year we assemble special exhibitions and displays and allow visitors to freely explore our facilities to inform the public about our research activities.

Hiroshima Laboratory (Mr. Jun Kitamura, Chair, Open House Working Committee)

This year, the event was held at the Hiroshima Laboratory August 3–4 and at the Nagasaki Laboratory August 8–9. Reports from the Open House Working Committee Chairs of both cities are detailed below.

This year Hiroshima held its 24th Open House. Over a two-day period, 953 people visited the Hiroshima Laboratory, despite the fact that the event was held in scorching temperatures and followed torrential rains that beset the area and resulted in extensive damage. Some visitors hailed from communities that were affected by the heavy rain; I was deeply moved that they visited RERF amidst such severe circumstances. I want to offer my heartfelt sympathies to those affected by the disaster, as well as my hope that they are able to rebuild and recover as soon as possible.

Once again this year, we held hands-on exhibits during which visitors could look at blood through microscopes and extract DNA, a science corner at which visitors could observe radiation, as well as panels explaining RERF's research. The liquid nitrogen experiment was a crowd favorite, with people having to stand for lack of room: I even witnessed parents and children running to make sure they got seats. The auditorium was full and bustling with activity during both the "What's Radiation?" lecture and the "Lecture on genes: Why do some children resemble their parents while others do not?" I also could not help but smile at the sight of mothers led by children intent on successfully completing the stamp rally.



Families watching liquid nitrogen experiments



Children observing blood cells

Nagasaki Laboratory (Mr. Katsunori Urakawa, Chair, Open House Working Committee)

Nagasaki RERF held its 22nd Open House this year. This time we had 581 people visit despite consecutive days of scorching high temperatures and the fact that the event was held during the week on Wednesday and Thursday.

In addition to panel displays detailing research conducted at this laboratory, during the Nagasaki hands-on exhibits, we newly created and displayed panels for children; visitors were able to measure and analyze their bone density, body fat percentage, grip strength, and urine quality, make cooling packs, and observe their own blood through a microscope. Furthermore, in addition to the annual experiments with liquid nitrogen, which are beloved by children, exclamations of visitors could be heard as they watched radiation move through this year's cloud chamber exhibit.

This Open House special event, the “Special Summer-break Lecture,” was an easy-to-understand explanation of radiation for children of all ages and was so lively that we had to bring in additional seating, as there were no empty seats among the 50 we had prepared.

Visitors earned stamps for answering simple questions in our annual stamp rally, with the rally continuing to receive excellent reviews.



Family listening to panel explanation for children



Children peering into cloud chamber