

iCLA Obento

ISSUE 12 | JUNE 2025

NEWSLETTER TOPICS

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SPOTLIGHT:
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DANIEL

HOW'S IT
GOING WITH
NEW iCLA
STUDENTS



The iCLA Obento is a newsletter dedicated to highlighting the successes of iCLA's community members, celebrating our unique backgrounds, and learning more about the members of iCLA's community. We hope you enjoy reading about iCLA's bright students and wonderful faculty members in interviews, news articles, and feature pieces.

iCLA OBENTO ARCHIVE



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iCLA International College of Liberal Arts



Student Spotlight: Floor Assistants

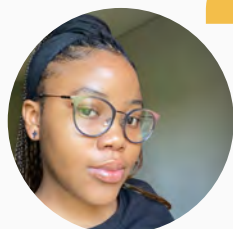
The iCLA dormitory is more than just a place to sleep—it's a space where students unwind, connect, and build community after a day of classes. Ensuring that this environment is welcoming, respectful, and comfortable is important. Floor Assistants (FA) are student staff who are playing a vital role in fostering a supportive and well-functioning dormitory experience.

Each floor in the Male and Female Dorms has a Main-Floor Assistant and a Sub-Floor Assistant, ensuring that every resident has approachable, peer-based support right on their floor. Floor Assistants act as both community builders and key communicators between residents and the iCLA Administrative Office's Student Affairs Team.

Read on to learn more about how Floor Assistants are helping in the iCLA community:

1. Building a community

Living and learning in a shared space with students from diverse backgrounds offers valuable opportunities for growth, but it also comes with challenges. Floor Assistants help residents navigate these challenges by encouraging mutual respect and understanding. They facilitate the creation of Unitmate and Floormate Agreements to establish clear expectations around communal living, such as quiet hours or shared space usage. By guiding these discussions, FAs help foster a harmonious environment where everyone can thrive. Beyond this, FAs are also connectors—sharing news about campus events and encouraging residents to get involved, helping dorm life feel active and inclusive.



FLORA

I think it's really important for residents to talk and agree on expectations because it helps in building a strong foundation of both accountability, and comfort. I feel when people are clear about what kind of behavior is okay and what isn't, it helps reduce misunderstandings that can occur and creates a sense of responsibility for the space we all live in. The iCLA dorm has people from diverse backgrounds, so having these conversations helps align our values and create a more peaceful and supportive space.

To help make this happen, I try to create small opportunities for connection—like having impromptu chats when I run into people by the elevator or in the hallway. These casual moments sometimes lead to meaningful conversations that can make one feel heard and included.



Student Spotlight: Floor Assistants

2. Facilitating communication

Floor Assistants make sure there is a clear line of communication between residents and between the iCLA Administrative Office. If there is something on your mind about the dormitory, Floor Assistants listen to your opinions and concerns. FAs also ensure that announcements are informed to residents so you're aware of important information in a timely manner. They are also a friendly peer to provide basic guidance on daily life and campus resources.



I think communication is important in general to maintain a good relationship among people, and communication among the residents and the iCLA Administrative Office is essential to maintaining a comfortable environment in the dorm. When there is information from the iCLA Administrative Office that there are maintenance, repairs, or procedures that will happen within the dorms, it is important that the message reaches the residents. It is also important that residents raise issues they are experiencing in the dorm so Administration can provide the necessary guidance. Without this communication, there may be conflict. I think the best way to make sure that important messages get to people are by being consistent and conscious as a floor assistant. Both residents and iCLA Admin have trust in floor assistants to relay those messages. If a floor assistant is not assisting as needed, then there may be miscommunication and misunderstanding between the administration and the students. Our job is not only to make sure that the students are safe and following the rules, but also to work as a bridge among the many students and iCLA.



EMILY

3. Maintenance of residence space

Sometimes, things in the dormitory are not working as they are meant to, such as a blocked sink or lightbulb that needs changing. Floor Assistants check the situation and make sure those issues are reported to the Admin Staff so they can relay the message to the building management company. Having several people live in a shared space can get messy too. In those cases, FAs help to maintain a tidy space, such as assigning cleaning duties, explaining garbage disposal rules, or organizing Cleaning Days.



HIND

When something needs to be fixed, I try to address it as soon as possible. I believe delaying action can create unnecessary misunderstandings, so I communicate quickly, either in person or online, to discuss the issue. From there, I determine whether it's something that can be resolved within the unit or if it needs to be brought to the admin's attention. To keep the floor tidy, I lead by example in my own unit. We have a clear cleaning schedule with small weekly tasks that match each person's preferences. This helps everyone feel less overwhelmed and more willing to contribute. I also respect that different units have different dynamics, so I check in with each unit occasionally to ensure everyone feels comfortable in their space. Having a Sub-FA in another unit helps me gain a balanced view and better support the floor as a whole.

First off, I need to give a big shout-out to the members on my floor. They've made my semester easy by sorting things out themselves and being adults that can have conversations when needed. When that isn't possible though, or they aren't able to have those conversations, that's when I step in. When I am alerted to an issue, my first course of action is always to talk it out with all the parties involved, I like to make sure I know the whole situation before going any deeper into the issue. Once I know everything, I try to resolve it between us as I don't want to involve the Admin Office if it's unnecessary. To be honest though, the best way to make sure your floor is nice is being friends with the people on your floor. I'd say I am friends with 80-90% of my floor, which makes it easy, because if there is a problem you can always figure out a way to talk it out. Big shout out to my 3rd floor members!



SAWYER

Student Spotlight: Floor Assistants

4.Enforcing the rules

For the safety and comfort of residents, Floor Assistants report anything amiss in the dorms to the iCLA Admin Office. That can include incidents such as rule-breaking, intrusion, accidents, or damage in the dorm. Floor Assistants can also issue warnings to rule-breaking residents and report the situation to the Admin Staff.



SHINTARO

Having set rules is one thing, but complying with them is another. I believe enforcing rules is a necessary procedure for everyone's well-being to maintain the conditions of a shared living space. It is a way to keep individuals accountable for their actions that break the rules or disrupt the tranquility of the space.

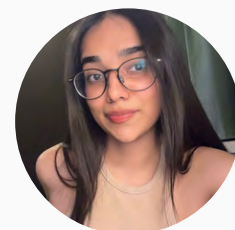


5.Assisting operations on Move in and Move out Days

When you were a new student, you may remember a friendly student helper welcoming you on your first day to campus and guiding you to your dorm room, or showing you around the iCLA building in a tour. Floor Assistants are there on Move-In Days to help new students get settled into their new lives at iCLA. FAs also help to organize Welcome Mixer during orientation, which gets together new and current students in an evening of fun games and snacks to get to know each other.

Similarly, they might be there when you decide to move out of the dorm to conduct the final room check and paperwork.

As a Floor Assistant, I make new students feel welcome by warmly greeting them on move-in day, helping them with their luggage, and patiently answering all their questions to ease any worries they might have. I also show them around the dorm to help them get comfortable quickly. I remember how overwhelming it was for me at first, so I try to be a friendly and reliable presence. It's important because when students feel supported from the beginning, they can relax, connect more easily, and enjoy their time at iCLA.



FREYA

6.Point of communication with the iCLA Administrative Office

On a technical level, Floor Assistants must make weekly reports and patrol checks on the situations within their floors. They also attend weekly meetings to discuss issues and solutions with Admin Staff. This ensures that they stay on-top of what is happening, and so are iCLA's Student Affairs Team.

Floor Assistants are the heart of our dormitory community. It's because of our friendly FAs that new students are able to transition smoothly into campus life and build meaningful connections with those around them.

We are truly grateful for the hard work and commitment shown by our Main-FAs and Sub-FAs. Your presence, care, and leadership help make our dormitory not just a place to live, but a place to belong. Thank you for everything you do!

iCLA Student Affairs Team



LUCIA



Graduate Interview DANIEL

Daniel is an iCLA graduate of Fall 2024! Staying in Yamanashi after graduating, he is currently working with Endress + Hauser, a global company for industrial process measurement and automation products and services.

Despite the restrictions of the COVID-19 Pandemic which delayed his arrival to the iCLA campus at the beginning of his degree, Daniel made remarkable use of his time at iCLA. He demonstrated initiative and leadership by co-founding iCLA's Gaming Club, Radianite, creating a vibrant community for iCLA students with shared interests. His dedication to campus life extended further through his roles as a Student Ambassador, where he provided invaluable insights into student life for prospective students, and as a Floor Assistant in the iCLA dormitory, contributing to a positive and supportive living environment.

Read on to learn more about Daniel's career path after graduation, his insights on job hunting in Japan, and the responsibilities of his current role!

Interview with Daniel

1. Can you tell me about where you're employed and what your job position is?

Daniel: I am employed at Endress+Hauser Yamanashi, and my job position is a Project Engineer.

2. What does a typical day look like for you in your job?

Daniel: My typical day at work right now is to study the business around tank gauging and the products we sell so that I can better understand them. In the future, my work would involve giving solutions to problems and giving instructions to projects in the tank gauging field around the world.

3. How did you get involved in your current field of work?

Daniel: After searching for a job in Japan and numerous career forums, I found my job through a career forum in Kofu.

Interview with Daniel

Graduate Interview DANIEL

4. Why did you decide to study and subsequently stay to work in Japan?

Daniel: I have loved the culture of Japan for a long time now, and I wanted to challenge myself to make a living alone in a country far away from my home country.

5. What was your major at iCLA and why did you choose it?

Daniel: I chose Global Business & Economics major due to my interest in finance, business and numbers.

6. In what ways has your academic experiences in your courses or skills you gained at iCLA been advantageous/applicable in your work?

Daniel: I believe the fact that I chose many subjects around all majors has been useful in my work - for example taking finance courses, design courses and especially the programming language courses that iCLA offers. Developing your logical thinking skills while being creative is very important for the engineering field. With the combination of programming, finance courses and design courses at iCLA, I could develop these skills thoroughly, which has helped me a lot.

7. Was there anything you were glad you accomplished during your time at iCLA (academic or extracurricular)?

Daniel: I am glad that I went out of my way to participate in many different courses, as well as creating the Gaming Club with my friends. Managing it gave me quite a big insight into managing time, efforts, leadership, therefore I would really recommend for people to create something during their life at iCLA. I participated in many different aspects as well, so I would just suggest for people to take action and be proactive into creating something that they are proud of.

8. What was the most difficult thing you experienced when searching for a job and how did you overcome it?

Daniel: Searching for a job as a foreigner in Japan could be quite challenging, however, persistence and strong will is the key. Be proactive and never give up. I would advise people to study Japanese and dive deep into the culture because I think if you do that, you will show a more positive side to employers and Japanese businesses, which combined with persistence and never giving up, would give you good chances into succeeding in whatever you have set as a goal for yourself.

9. What assistance/job hunting/career support, if any, did you receive from YGU/iCLA?

Daniel: I actually found about this Kofu career forum through iCLA, so be alert of anything that the university is displaying, because iCLA wants to help you.

10. If you did an internship through iCLA/YGU, how did it help you develop & find work upon graduation?

I did not do an internship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic situation and not being able to enter into Japan for half of my tertiary education. However, I highly suggest searching for internship opportunities to gain experience and to see how the work environment suits you.



New Students Interview

Spring Semester 2025 is in full swing – let's hear from iCLA's new students! As we reach the halfway point of the semester, it's the perfect time to check in with some of our iCLA community members! Find out how the Spring 2025 entrants are settling into life on campus, what they're enjoying most, and what they're looking forward to during their time at iCLA.

Kay, Myanmar

Why did you decide to study at iCLA?

Kay: iCLA offers me many opportunities and career options, so I think studying here was the best choice. My family members have careers in economics, so I was inspired to pursue the major Global Business and Economics.

Japan is a beautiful country, and what I really love about Japan is how they work and how they are very well managed in everything, and I want to challenge myself and improve that in my life.

How is your life at iCLA going so far?

Kay: So far, I am doing really well. Although economics is quite a challenging subject because I'm new to it, I'm trying my best to learn. What surprises me is how much professors care about the students. I like being active in classes, and professors will call me by my name. For the subjects I am learning, it's challenging because it's a different curriculum from what I learned in Myanmar. But I am catching up very well. Overall, it's really good.

Can you tell me one thing which you have enjoyed since coming here?

Kay: Studying with friends because in my country, we mostly did individual projects. But here, the professor can assign us with random people for assignments and presentations, and I am having fun with that. I learn how to work in a team and I also learn about other cultures. I can improve myself – everyone's trying their best, so I want to be like them.



You also joined the Shingen-ko Festival.

Kay: It was a very remarkable experience. Every time we did the cheer together, it gave me goosebumps. I didn't know it was going to be such a huge event with so many people. It was tiring at the end of the day, but the excitement and experience, I would never trade that.

Is there anything you're looking forward to during your time at iCLA?

Kay: During my time at iCLA, I really want to get work experience. That's another reason why I came to iCLA, because iCLA offers career training to students. I want to implement my knowledge from iCLA to an actual workplace. After graduating, I want to work in Japan for a few years and then pursue my master's degree in Japan.



iCLA International College of Liberal Arts



New Students Interview



Riley, USA

Why did you decide to study at iCLA?

Riley: I gained an interest in Political Science from a teacher, but I'd also been really interested in specifically the international aspect of it. I looked really hard for an international relations or political science program in America that met what I wanted to do, but all of them were very America-centric and I was not super happy with that, so I went looking for programs in other countries and I found iCLA. Which was crazy, because I've always wanted to go to Japan.

How is your life at iCLA going?

Riley: So far, I really love it here. I love the way the dorms are. It's super nice and cozy. They're the perfect size for me, which sounds weird because I brought 5 luggages and everyone teased me.

But everything that I brought fits perfectly in the space there. I'm typically a messy person, but because it's the size it is, I make sure that everything gets cleaned up. My unitmate and I typically watch movies and TV shows together in the dorm.

Classes are going really good. I like all of my classes and we're just starting to get into midterms, which is getting a little harder, but not unmanageable.

Can you tell me one thing which you're enjoying since coming here.

Riley: I really, really love Japan. But I think what I love the most is seeing Mount Fuji every day. My friend and I will go for a walk to Lawson, and when we walk back to iCLA, it's like, "Look, there's Mount Fuji!" It's always there, and it's so nice. I get to brag to my friends back home about it.

Is there anything you're looking forward to during your time at iCLA?

Riley: I'm really excited for more Political Science courses because I've learned a lot just by having discussions with my classmates in class. You can't cover the whole world in world history class, but I can talk to people, and they can tell me about their experiences. And it's really nice to have such a different environment. In America, I would have been around mostly American people who have similar American experiences. Here, my unitmates are from Cambodia, Philippines, Germany, and different places. It's just super cool to talk to everybody and hear their stories and about their lives.

New Students Interview

Aamina, Sri Lanka



Why did you decide to study at iCLA?

Aamina: I've wanted to study in Japan for a really long time. I chose Yamanashi, and after browsing, I came across iCLA. First, I could study in English, and second, the cultural diversity at iCLA really caught my eye.

What interested you about Japan in particular?

Aamina: Actually, I have family living in Japan. One of my cousins who lives here recommended me to come here.

How is your life in iCLA going so far?

Aamina: I was quite hesitant at first whether I would fit in. But then actually, everyone was so nice. The professors are very interactive in classes. They give individual attention. I was really worried about whether I would be able to catch up with lessons, but then they guided me through everything even though I arrived late. They did so much for me, and I'm really grateful to them. For the students too, even though we come from different backgrounds, no one is treated differently, regardless of whether they're degree-seeking or short-term program students. It's been a fun experience.

Can you tell me one thing which you're enjoying since coming here?

Aamina: Since coming here, I'd say one thing is traveling around. Since I come from a third-world country, we don't travel much, and we don't walk a lot. One thing I like about Yamanashi and iCLA is that it's quite peaceful everywhere. I can walk freely without worrying about anything. I'm enjoying my morning walks. The second thing is the food. I hadn't tried Japanese food before, so I was looking forward to try it. It didn't disappoint me at all, it was really delicious.

Is there anything that you're looking forward to doing at iCLA?

Aamina: I'm looking forward to the cultural events. We had the Acoustic Night recently and it helped as a getaway for the burnout, especially with preparing for the midterms. I'm looking forward to more cultural events with the Yamanashi community too, like Shingen-ko Festival. Even though I was not there, I saw the photos and it looked really fun.



SOCIAL MEDIA FEATURES



iCLA students recently visited Kai Zenkoji Temple and Tokoji Temple as part of iCLA's iEXPerience Program, guided by Professor William Reed.



What an amazing time at Acoustic Night organized by Interdisciplinary Arts professors Dr. Mike Blow and Dr. Sam Stocker.



iCLA graduate of 2020 and artist Gaku Okata has completed a large-scale public mural in Yamanashi City!



Check out our photos of cherry blossoms on campus!

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