

Dear my brothers and sisters in Islam,

Assalam alaykum wa rahmatullah

I hope this email reach you while you are enjoying your great day and Islamic spirits.

My name is Chihiro. I am writing an email from Japan. I have wanted to tell you appreciation for long time, but somehow hesitated. I decided to email to you today.

I was an international student at astAte. Long time back in 2014, I visited the Islamic Center of Jonesboro.

I majored in Sociology and took Sociology of Religion that year. I had assignments to visit 5 different religious sites and write paper on them.

One of the sites I chose was your center. I asked my Saudi Arabian friend to take me there.

At the first visit, I got to see the prayer room and learnt how to do wudu and how to pray.

At the second visit, alhandullillah some prayers and the Imam were willing to make time for me and my classmate to have interview.

Before the interview time, a lady offered us a delicious food, which was spicy chicken and flavored basmati rice.

my classmate and I asked many questions, and you all were very kind to share your opinions.

I guess, when we were talking about media or it might be about society of Islamophobia, the Imam looked at us and said "read" to us.

He repeated the word three times. And he continued and said, our impression and thoughts on something could depend on how much knowledge we have about it.

I was deeply impressed with his word.

On leaving the center, he gave me some books on Islam; the Quran in English and the book about salat in Japanese, etc.

Since then I tried to study and understand Islam. It didn't take long time to accept it.

After settling in new life in Japan, I was ready to do shahada in front of people.

It's passed almost three years since I visited the Islamic Center. I visited the Arab Islamic Institute in Tokyo and made appointment with the Imam there.

I shared my beautiful experience and your warm welcome at the Islamic Center of Jonesboro with the staff at masjids in Japan.

Again alhandullillah and thank you for giving opportunity to think about and learn Islam.

I also want to thank you to Muslim brothers and sisters in Jonesboro for showing me peace and equality by their behavior and language.

You are the most giving people I have met in the states. Jazaka allah

Lastly, the date I visited your center was on June 29, 2014 or Ramadan 2, 1435, and the date I visited the Institute in Tokyo for fist time was on May 28, 2017 or Ramadan 2, 1438. What a coincidence! I found it out this weekend, and that got me to write thank-you letter to you.

the Arab Islam Institute gave me the book about the life of the prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Through the book, I got to know where the Imam of the Islamic Center of Jonesboro quoted from to tell me to have knowledge. Masha allah

Next time I visit your center, I will be praying there as a muslim.

I wish I can tell appreciation to you in person. Excuse me for sending quite long email, but I will be glad if you read this all.

Subhan allah

Wassalam alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

佐藤 千尋

Chihiro Chanty Sato