

Olympic and Paralympic Education Programme 2018

Dream and Future Project

Activity Report



The Date and Location:

June 20, 2018 (WED) 9:35AM – 12:15PM

Meguro City Shimomeguro Elementary School (2-7-9, Meguro, Meguro Ward, Tokyo)

Number of Participants: 377 students

Lecturer: Airi Hatakeyama

(Former Olympian Group Rhythmic Gymnast representing Japan)

Records: 2012 Summer Olympics in London 7th Place

2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro 8th Place

SUMMARY

On June 20, 2018, we invited Airi Hatakeyama, a former Olympian group rhythmic gymnast representing Japan, and organized an event under the Dream and Future Project (“YOKOSO” Program) at Meguro City Shimomeguro Elementary School. In addition to the lecture, students enjoyed trying gymnastic training mat exercises and they actively participated in the event.



Ms. Hatakeyama
giving a lecture to students



Student succeeds at forming circles

LECTURE

Ms. Hatakeyama told students that she started gymnastics when she was in the first grade at elementary school and spoke about the experience that inspired her to dream of becoming an Olympian as well as how she has worked towards her dream.

She talked about her first Olympics, the London 2012 Olympics, which she participated in after overcoming many hardships and frustrations, and the Rio 2016 Olympics, which she attended with gratitude to her family and everyone who supported her as she had decided to retire from the competition after the Olympics. She has started the second stage of her life and is now trying new things after her retirement. Based on these experiences, she gave students three pieces of life advice.

1. “Find something that you have a passion for. If you already have a dream, work hard towards your dream. If you don’t have a dream yet, keep looking and work on the things you truly enjoy.”
2. “Experience various things. Never be afraid of failure.”
3. “Believe in yourself.”

Students were very impressed by the advice from Ms. Hatakeyama, who made her dream come true through determination and endless effort.

GYMNASTIC TRAINING (MAT EXERCISES)

Ms. Hatakeyama held a gymnastics training class for the 5th and 6th grades. She taught students the basics of mat exercises: the forward roll, backward roll and cartwheel.

She showed her model example of each exercise, gave tips, and assisted students during the class. Students greatly enjoyed the training with Ms. Hatakeyama.



Backward roll training



Cartwheel training

Comments from Students:

“I realized again how important it is to work hard towards one’s dream. I related to Ms. Hatakeyama very much because, like she said, I often lose myself in what I love to do and daydream during the class.”
(6th grade girl)

“I have known about Ms. Hatakeyama since I was in kindergarten, and I started gymnastics because of her. I had quit gymnastics but her lecture made me want to do it again.”
(6th grade girl)

“I am now debating which dream for my future I should choose. I have two dreams: one is to be a lawyer and one to be a soccer player. I had felt that my dream to become a soccer player may be too difficult but after her lecture, I felt that I should not give up yet.”
(6th grade boy)

“I had to quit American football due to education and it made me sad, but listening to her lecture about believing in oneself, I felt that I should continue on with confidence.”
(6th grade boy)

Comment from Ms. Airi Hatakeyama:

Students greeted me cheerily from the start, and I wanted to talk to them about a lot of things. Students actively raised their hands in the class and asked many questions. They also listened to me attentively until the very end, so I was very happy.

Moreover, it seemed that many of the students at Shimomeguro Elementary School have dreams for the future. It is important to start dreaming when you're young, so I wish that each of them have many experiences and find the right dream for them.

The biggest drive for my dream was always the feeling that "Gymnastics is fun. I love gymnastics." Today, I taught mat exercises to the students, and I hope they learned not only the exercises but also realized that everything is fun when you work hard at it. I believe that sports are the easiest way to see the result of one's own efforts. Through sports, I hope they experience fulfillment, gain confidence, and eventually develop the determination to never give up and the passion to pursue their dreams.