

## My Uchideshi Life in Tokorozawa Dojo Liao Chia Chun

After my high school graduation, my father asked me if I wanted to participate in the uchideshi project, which we've been discussed about three years ago. I was really excited about it but at the same time I was scared, because I can't even speak Japanese and didn't know Japanese culture. But all of my worries are worthless, the Kobayashi family are very hospitable and led me to discover more about the beauty of Japanese culture.

Being uchideshi isn't an easy work, you have to clean the dojo before and after keiko, which is quite different from Taiwanese dojo. Even the tea drinking and folding hakama for sensei, but all of these differences show out the respect for sensei's teaching. Also two or more keiko in a day is really tiring but at the same time these keiko make you stronger and improve your aikido skill.

In another respect, the uchideshi project let me know that life is really simple and also tiring. In this kind of life style, you are always tired and all you have to do is to keep yourself healthy, do as much as you can, and catch every chance to train with sensei and other classmates. Uchideshi

also makes you become a better person, before being a uchideshi I am a person without living ability, but after it I learned how to cook, how to buy things in supermarket, cleaning Dojo and make breakfast for sensei.

Now if anyone would like to try uchideshi, I would told him or her don't hesitate this is not only the best way to learn aikido but it can also let you know how you to treat your life and think what you should do. The experience you get in uchideshi life is much more than all your energy payment, and it is really a good chance to improve yourself.

At last, I want to say thank you to Hiroaki sensei for giving me this opportunity to participate in uchideshi and let me be the first girl to stay in Tokorozawa dojo, which also gave me the chance to learn from my roommates. And thank you to my two roommates, Recep and Justin, who made the uchideshi life much funny and easier. Also to all the people who had helped me to be a good uchideshi and those who always tried hard to make me forget the homesick, *arigatougozaimasu*.



(my first time wearing yukata)



(photo with Hiroaki sensei)



(photo with Miyoko san (wife of Hiroaki sensei))



(photo with Kaho (daughter of Hiroaki sensei))