

Scientists for a day

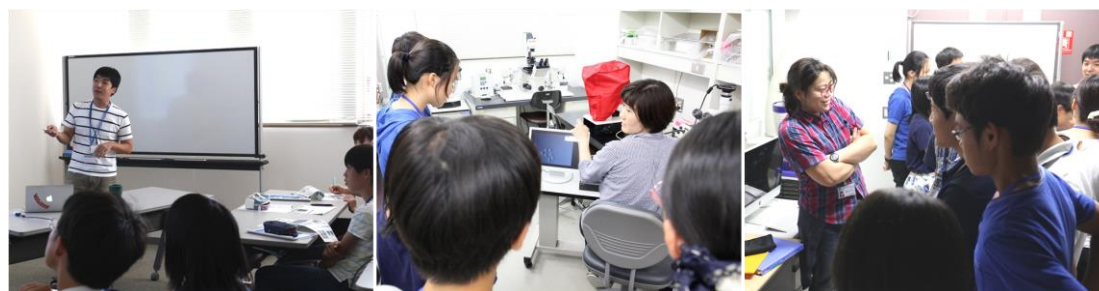
Sep. 2, 2016– RIKEN CDB's annual one-day summer school program for high school students was held this year on August 18 and 23. This popular event features a program that includes a talk by a CDB scientist, a tour inside a working laboratory, and a hands-on experiment session.

The theme of this year's program was genes and their functions, and the students analyzed the DNA extracted from their own cheek epithelial cells to determine whether or not they carry a single nucleotide polymorphism in their gene encoding an enzyme involved in metabolizing alcohol called alcohol dehydrogenase 2 (ALDH2). While the students initially appeared somewhat bewildered, trying to take in all of the new terminology being introduced and also get a handle on using unfamiliar tools such as micropipettes, by the end of the day, they had grasped the use of the equipment and were actively supporting each other to complete their tasks.



Students carrying out experiments

This year's talk was given by research scientists Katsutoshi Mizuno and Natsumi Shimizu of the Laboratory for Organismal Patterning, who introduced the current understanding of the mechanisms regulating left-right asymmetry in the animal body. Following the talk, the students had the opportunity to visit the Laboratory for Organismal Patterning and see actual samples of early stage mouse embryos and motile unicellular flagellates called *Chlamydomonas*, which were mentioned in the talk. They also got a close look at some of state-of-the-art equipment used to carry out research.



Talk by scientist and visit to the lab

This year was the tenth time the summer school program has been organized, and thirty-three high school students, mainly from schools around the Kansai area, participated over the two days.

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Group photo at the end of the day