

〈Opening Ceremony〉

- Greeting from the Organizer -

Hidetaro Shibayama

President, National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya

On behalf of the faculty of the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who have come from both Japan and overseas to participate in the SCO-OP International seminar 2008 on the Development of Career Training Programs for Sporting Professions. I would also like to take this opportunity to pay my deep respects to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and all others whose cooperation and special efforts have made this seminar possible.

The National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Kanoya aims to provide advanced, specialist training for sports instructors. This seminar is based upon that ideal. In particular, as part of the development of a co-op program for the training of specialists in the sports business field, this seminar is held with the purpose of outlining present conditions and future possibilities within sport-related professions in line with respective co-op programs in Germany, Canada and Korea.

Ever since it was founded NIFS has focused on training physical education instructors as Japan's only national single-department physical education college, and two-week physical education internships have been a requirement to provide students with a venue to acquire practical instructional skills. Terminology has changed along with society, with “physical education” being replaced with “lifelong sports,” and the NIFS curriculum has also undergone repeated changes to meet the needs of the times. However, as can be seen in the Basic Plan for Promotion of Sports and the Campaign for People’s Health in the 21st Century, the role played by physical education and sports in modern society is increasingly important.

In the midst of such circumstances the mission of NIFS is to produce human resources that will be useful as physical education and sports professionals. We believe that the industry-academia partnership in the development of our sco-op program for practical career training is an extremely valuable tool that will help us fulfill that mission. Consequently, the program also contains our desire to pass on the ideals of NIFS as a front-runner among physical education and sports universities in Japan.

I am certain that the results obtained from this international seminar will contribute greatly to student education in physical education and sports universities throughout Japan. Thank you again for your participation.