

[A20] Supporting a para-athlete for an inclusive world

For a society where people can recognize each other's "differences" and make the most of them together.

NTT Finance has been carrying out initiatives that strive for Diversity & Inclusion.

For example, at the Yono Office in Saitama, we have been promoting initiatives tied to our local community, such as creating a disability-friendly workplace, interacting with special needs schools, and exchanging insights with developmental centers and academic groups.

And recently, as a new initiative that aims to create a society where everyone can thrive, we hired a para-athlete swimmer, to help realize Diversity & Inclusion as well as organizational growth.

Although I have a disability in my left arm, I have been swimming since childhood, and when I was considering how to keep swimming as a working adult, I had the chance to interview with NTT Finance.

What made a lasting impression was how they discussed "not just being able to provide a workplace, but how I could contribute to the company as an athlete employee," and the fact that I was able to feel the desire to "empower the company through my athletic activities" was why I decided to join this company.

In terms of work, we've been able to accommodate new working styles and have devised ways to address challenges.

It must've been tough for him to balance a new job with intense workouts, but he took part in many races and steadily improved.

Seeing him work hard at both his job and sport despite his disability, we naturally felt more and more support for him as well as for an inclusive society, and we began to feel united as a company.

In response to employee requests, we created an internal support page for him, and also opened his official webpage on our company website.

In addition, we traveled to the big tournaments to cheer him on in person.

We held an online fan meeting with payment center employees from across the country, and by talking directly to him, we were able to feel closer to Kubota-san.

We also held a "cheering video contest," which helped create a unified atmosphere throughout our company.

Until then, we had never built awareness on a nationwide scale, but thanks to the contest, I think it improved our ability to collaborate.

As expected, Kubota-kun cannot always be in good form, but it seems that the various initiatives taken by the company have given him strength.

Above all, Kubota's success has led to him being featured on TV and media outlets, and as his fellow employee, I feel proud, and I believe we all want to support him even more now.

NTT Finance will continue to support Kubota-san and work with NTT Group companies that also employ para-athletes, making use of this initiative to promote Diversity & Inclusion and organizational growth, to help realize an inclusive society and contribute to a better future.