

## Aaron Ouchi

Masters student in Marine Chemistry

Aloha, my name is Aaron Ouchi and I am currently studying at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa. I have been conducting research on coral calcification. More specifically, I have been looking at how ocean acidification due to additional CO<sub>2</sub> input from the atmosphere will affect coral reefs in the future. In addition to acidification, I'm also looking at temperature as well as light intensity. Previous research done on this subject has shown that temperature tends to have a fairly large effect on calcification. There has also been evidence for photosynthesis affecting calcification through many different mechanisms.

My research is conducted in-situ using a medium sized tidepool that becomes completely separated from the surrounding water as the tide drops. Conducting the experiment in the field allows me to examine the complex interaction between the different variables in-situ. Even though I am looking most specifically at acidification, the results will not only reflect acidification but also a combination of the different variables. This hasn't been done much previously and could give an interesting result as there is a possibility that all the different variables could interact in such a way that it mitigates the effect of increased CO<sub>2</sub> or it could compound the effect.



In addition to my research here in Okinawa, I have also used my free time to learn much about the Okinawan culture and history. Recently, I volunteered as a translator at the 5<sup>th</sup> Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival in Okinawa. I ended up joining the World Youth Uchinanchu Association and have learned even more about the history of Okinawa. Okinawa is a very different place than the rest of Japan and I feel that you need to come to Okinawa to understand the specialness that is Okinawa. Also, I have joined a dance group called 琉球ストンプ (Ryukyu Stomp) which originally started as an event to welcome back Uchinanchu from around the world. Now, we are trying to get the younger generations excited about their heritage and learn about their past.



Life in Okinawa is a very relaxed place where the weather is fairly decent year around. It doesn't get too cold but it does get quite humid during the summer months

and there is definitely a wet and dry season. Around the campus can be rather boring, but if you have a car or friends with cars, there are many places that you can go and see in Okinawa.

All research and funding was supported by OIMAP.