



Japan's Friendship Ties Program (USA)
KAKEHASHI Project
The Winners of Japanese Speech Contest Slot Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan's Friendship Ties Program, 9 university students from the United States visited Japan from January 9th to January 16th, 2017 to participate in the program aimed at promoting their understanding of Japan with regard to Japanese politics, economy, society, culture, history, and foreign policy. Through lecture by ministry, observation of historical sites, school exchange, homestay, and other experiences, the participants enjoyed a wide range of opportunities to improve their understanding of Japan and shared their individual interests and experiences through SNS. Based on their findings and learning in Japan, each group of participants made a presentation in the final session and reported on the action plans to be taken after returning to their home country.

【Participating Countries and Number of Participants】

U.S.A. : 9 participants

【Prefectures Visited】

Tokyo, Chiba

2. Program Schedule

January 9 th (Mon)	Arrival at Narita / Haneda International Airport
January 10 th (Tue)	[Orientation] [Lecture] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, North American Bureau “Japan's Foreign Policy” [Courtesy Call] Mr. Koichi HAGIUDA, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary [Cutting Edge Technology] Chiba Institute of Technology, Skytree Town Campus
January 11 th (Wed)	Move to Chiba [Nature · History · Culture] Mt. Nokogiri, Nihon-ji temple [Observation] Roadside station "Hota Shogakko" [Nature] Narcissus flowerer picking [Homestay]
January 12 th (Thu)	[Courtesy Call] Kyonan town hall [Cultural Experience · Exchange] Zazen experience, Kagami-Biraki experience in Daichi-an
January 13 th (Sat)	[School Exchange] Kanda University of International Studies Move to Tokyo
January 14 th (Sun)	[Cultural Experience] Kimono wearing experience [Historical Landmarks] Senso-ji temple in Asakusa [History & Culture] Edo Tokyo Museum [Observation] Odaiba Area
January 15 th (Mon)	[Observation] Tsukiji Fish Market

[Cutting Edge Technology] HONDA Welcome Plaza Aoyama
 [Workshop]
 January 16th (Mon) [Observation] Tokyo Metropolitan Government
 [Reporting Session]
 Departure from Narita / Haneda International Airport

3. Program Photos Tokyo



1/10 [Lecture] Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
 North American Bureau (Tokyo)



1/10 [Courtesy Call] Mr. Koichi HAGIUDA,
 Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary (Tokyo)



1/10 [Cutting Edge Technology] Chiba
 Institute of Technology, Skytree Town
 Campus (Tokyo)



1/13 [School Exchange] Kanda University of
 International Studies (Chiba City)



1/14 [Historical Landmarks] Senso-ji temple
 (Tokyo)



1/16 [Reporting Session] (Tokyo)

Kyonan town in Chiba



1/11 [Nature · History · Culture]
Mt. Nokogiri, Nihon-ji temple (Kyonan-town)



1/12 [Courtesy Call] Kyonan Town Hall
(Kyonan-town)



1/12 [Cultural Experience] Zazen experience
in Daichi-an (Kyonan-town)



1/12 [Exchange] Kagami-Biraki experience
in Daichi-an (Kyonan-town)



1/13 [Cultural Experience] Wearing armor
(Kyonan-town)



1/13 [Homestay] Farewell Party
(Kyonan-town)

4. Voice from Participants

◆ U.S.A., University Student

School Exchange: The “Kizuna” in between people is really strong.. Although we were meeting with the students from KUIS for the first time. However, they were so kind and treat us like real friends, not just guests from foreign countries. I was so moved.

Homestay: My homestay family is like the real family to me. The mother always took care of my life and every single detail of my stay. They want us to feel like we were not here to visit, but here to live, to experience, and to enjoy. They always looked after for me and made me home. From the inside of my heart, I knew they really want us to like and enjoy the life in Japan.

◆ U.S.A., University Student

The lecturer from MOFA introduced the idea that a thriving country can be born from hard work. The controversy surrounding Article 9/Utopian pacifism/realistic pacifism was introduced well, and I understand how the masses can influence the peace of a nation. I learned a lot of history/politics/economics from his great lecture.

Homestay Family treated us very well, and we immediately fell in love with Japanese hospitality. I've also come to realize how often the Japanese watch the news and know every move that America is making.

The trip to Kyonan made me realize how Japanese society is rapidly changing, mostly in how many of the young flee the country side to work in dense town district where there are jobs. This experience led me to understand that it's very difficult to live in the rural areas of Japan due to the lack of job opportunities. The happy inhabitants of Kyonan showed me how kindly and professionally they can introduce Japan.

Wearing Kimono/Zazen/Armor these experiences showed me how “cool” Japan sometimes lies in the historical and traditional cultural activities. Japanese culture is very inviting in these areas, and it's good to show the world that Japan isn't all about the skyscrapers, Anime and robots, although those are very cool too.

◆ U.S.A., University Student

I enjoyed the kimono experience. It allowed me to feel like I was really being emerged in Japanese culture. Walking through the market place and visiting temple in Kimono is something I would recommend to others. Hiking on Nokogiriyama was an excellent way to get to see the nature of Japan, such as mountains and forests. Experiencing the city is important, but that is only half of the picture. Japan has a very dense landscape. Experiencing Japanese technology was also interesting, since Japan is a leading developer of technology. In addition, I also enjoyed experiencing the rich history of Japan with visits to museums and temples.

5. Voice from Japanese Participants

◆ University Student from School Exchange

At the beginning of class, we listened to them give speeches about themselves in Japanese, which really impressed me. They were able to fluently speak Japanese, which is a language they had studied, and also knew a great deal about Japanese politics and economics. They

had also given forethought to studying abroad at an exceptional university in Japan, thereby demonstrating a strong desire to learn. Seeing them made me think back on my four years of university, and made me feel regret over the meager amount of knowledge I have personally attained. But this exchange with them had an impact on my thinking by making me want to study more about my own country and put more effort into learning English with a view towards becoming a working adult.

We discussed communication styles within schools through this exchange. I was surprised at their explanation about how, in countries that do not use honorific language, they interact with each other without any major differences in how they respond based on whether they are speaking to teachers or more senior students. I told them about how there are implicit rules in the relationship between seniors and juniors, and I learned that in the United States there are terms and customs surrounding things like implicit rules and unwritten rules.

◆ **University Student from School Exchange**

I was worried about the extent to which we would hear nuanced opinions on the topic of gender, which is a difficult one to discuss. So it was a relief when the participants spoke based on their experiences to date.

The opinions on the social advances made by women and their standing in society were especially interesting, and I was particularly shocked to hear that there are no occupations with gender-based restrictions, and that the amount of pay received by women has grown higher on average.

What is more, when we discussed the “women’s only” facilities (like train cars, buses, and elevators) seen in public, some of the students expressed viewpoints that were in opposition to the installation of women’s only facilities. They explained that, whereas women’s only facilities were created in Japan to protect women, conversely in the United States they have been criticized by not only men but also women as discriminating against women. The final result was that those of us on the Japanese side came to agree with this opinion.

During the Japanese cultural experience, a hands-on corner for origami was set up, where we made basic shapes like shurikens and cranes. Since all of the students said that they had seen it done, but that this was the first time they were actually making them, they seemed to have a good time folding origami even while saying how hard it was. What is more, with origami you can have fun talking as you use your hands, so as we made origami we learned about one another’s school lives, and they took an interest in learning about Japanese culture and the Japanese language. For these reasons, we were able to have a well-rounded talk on subjects that would normally be difficult to ask about through just a discussion format, which made this an extremely meaningful time.

◆ **Host Family from Kyonan town**

In rural areas we have virtually no opportunities to interact with people from overseas, which made this an outstanding experience. I feel that this is a great motivation, especially for the children. We took part in the zazen meditation experience together, and it was great how this led to new realization as a result of taking part in this invaluable experience together with people from different nationalities. I would like to host more people once again if I have the chance.

6. Dissemination by the participants

 <p>Joe Chey 1月13日 · 公</p> <p>One response to the 少子高齢化 (decreasing youth, increasing age) problem is to modify existing elementary schools in a visitor-friendly way. 翻訳を見る</p> <p>いいね! コメントする シェアする</p> <p>あなたと他3人</p> <p>コメントする...</p>	 <p>Able Zhangさんが写真9件を追加しました — Joe Cheyさん、他7人と 神田外語大学にいます。 1月13日 · 千葉県千葉市 · 公</p> <p>日本で、いつも優しい人に会う。.. I have always been meeting kind people in Nihon. #kakehashi #KUIS #百人一首 #ありがとう</p>
<p>One response to the “Shoshi Koreika” (decreasing youth, increasing the elderly) problem is to modify existing elementary schools in a visitor-friendly way.</p>	<p>I have always been meeting kind people in Nihon.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

 <p>“KIZUNA” IS BEING INHERITED WITHIN THE CULTURE</p> <p>「絆」は日本文化の一部として いつも継承されている</p>	<p>アメリカでの戦略</p> <p>・発表する！</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>小さな日本語のデパート(ウェス、メル、ジョー)</th> <th>大きな日本語のデパート(グラント)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>日本に興味を持っている学生に経験について発表する。</td> <td>興味を持っている人がいっぱいなので、経験の話を語るよりも、経験について発表して、日本まで行ける機会を紹介する。</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(日本の魅力を高めるために)</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	小さな日本語のデパート(ウェス、メル、ジョー)	大きな日本語のデパート(グラント)	日本に興味を持っている学生に経験について発表する。	興味を持っている人がいっぱいなので、経験の話を語るよりも、経験について発表して、日本まで行ける機会を紹介する。	(日本の魅力を高めるために)	
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<p>Kizuna with Japanese people developed in this Kakehashi project will be kept for the future. It will also be taken over like Japanese inherited culture for those in younger generation and who are interested in visiting Japan.</p>	<p>Two approaches will be taken to enhance the interest to Japan; one is to share our experiences in Kakehashi project with people around; the other one is to have a presentation about our experiences in public with introducing the details information such as studying abroad etc.</p>						