



KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)

Inbound program for University students the 2nd Slot

Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, 75 university students and supervisors from the U.S. visited Japan from March 10 to March 19, 2019 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 the lectures, observations and interactions with Japanese people etc., the participants enjoyed a wide range of opportunities to improve their understanding of Japan and shared their individual interests and experiences on social media. 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 the U.S.

【Participating Countries and Numbers of Participants】

United States of America: 75 participants

(Breakdown)

Group A (25 participants) : Haverford College, Bryn Mawr College, Villanova University, Ursinus College (State of Pennsylvania)

Group B (25 participants) : George Washington University (District of Columbia)

Group C (25 participants) : University of North Georgia (State of Georgia)

【Prefectures Visited】

Tokyo (All), Aomori (Group A), Shiga (Group B), Saga (Group C)

2. Program Schedule

	Group A	Group B	Group C
Mar.10 (Sun)	Arrival		
Mar.11 (Mon)	【Lecture】 Mr. Jason P. Hyland, Representative Officer and President of MGM Resorts Japan, Former Charged Affaires of U.S. Embassy in Japan 【Orientation】		
	【Observation】 Imperial palace		Move to Saga from

	Move to Aomori from Tokyo	Move to Shiga from Tokyo	Tokyo
Mar.12 (Tue)	【Courtesy Call/ Lecture on the Region】 Nambu Town 【Observation】 Nambu Town Wholesale Market 【Historical Landmark/Cultural Experience】 Hokoji Temple, Meditation	【Lecture on the Region】 Omihachiman City 【Historical Landmark】 Omihachiman City Museum Preservation District for Historic Buildings, The Omi Brotherhood, Ltd. Memorial house, Himure Hachimangu Shrine 【Observation】 Vories Academy	【Courtesy Call】 Saga Prefectural 【Historical Landmark】 Saga Castle History Museum 【Cultural Experience】 Tea Ceremony, Japanese Harp Experience
Mar.13 (Wed)	【School Exchange】 Hachinohe Gakuin University 【Observation】 Hachinohe Portal Museum Hacchi 【Meeting with Host Family】	【Observation of Company】 La Collina Omihachiman 【Opinion Exchange】 Mr. Austin Moore 【Meeting with Host Family】	【School Exchange】 Saga University 【Meeting with Host Family】
Mar.14 (Thu)	【Farewell Party with Host Family】 【Workshop】		【Farewell Party with Host Family】 【Historical Landmark】 Karatsu Castle 【Workshop】
Mar.15 (Fri)	Move to Tokyo from Aomori	Move to Tokyo from Shiga	Move to Tokyo from Saga
	【Reporting Session】		
Mar.16 (Sat)	【Observation】 Edo-Tokyo Museum 【Observation】 Asakusa, Sensoji Temple	【Observation】 Asakusa, Sensoji Temple 【Observation】 Odaiba	
Mar.17 (Sun)	【Observation】 Meiji Jingu Shrine, Harajuku Departure		

3. Program Photos

All groups (Tokyo)



3/11 【Lecture】 Mr. Jason P. Hyland,
Representative Officer and President of
MGM Resorts Japan, Former Charged
Affaires of U.S. Embassy in Japan



3/15 【Reporting Session】

Group A (Aomori)



3/12 【Lecture on the Region】
Nanbu Town



3/12 【Observation】
Nanbu Town Wholesale Market



3/13 【Cultural Experience】 Hoko-ji Temple



3/13 【School Exchange】
Hachinohe Gakuin University

Group B (Shiga)



3/12 【Lecture on the Region】
Omihachiman City



3/12 【Observation of Cultural / Historical Sites】 Omihachiman City



3/13 【Observation of Company】
La Collina Omihachiman



3/14 【Farewell Party with Host Family】



Group C (Saga)



3/12 【Courtesy Call】 Saga Prefectural



3/12 【Historical Landmark】
Saga Castle History Museum

	
<p>3/12 【Cultural Experience】 Japanese Harp Experience</p>	<p>3/13 【School Exchange】 Saga University</p>

4. Voice from Participants (abstract)

Group A (Aomori)

◆ Lecture: I believe the lectures were really useful, informative starting points for me for the rest of the trip. Although I already knew of the declining population crisis and efforts of the natural disasters were in Japan, these lectures were important as they showed a more realistic perspective by the Japanese people of what happened. School exchange: A really great experience that allowed me to form friendship was in Japan. Company/Government office as stated previously, those visits allowed me to get a more “humanized” version of the effects of a declining population and natural disasters. Homestay: Very intimate experience that allowed me to make more connections with a family in Japan. Others: This entire experience has been extremely rewarding for me as an international learner.

◆ The most significant impression of each section was learning about a business man that has a company that uses branches as smoke chips and is making small changes in his business practice to help with the problem of the dying population. Doing origami and calligraphy with the university students and chatting about shared experience of college life. Hearing about the journey to become a foreign service diplomat and the success of Japanese & USA relations. I loved cooking yakitori with my host family outside with a charcoal barbeque and playing cards with cute and curious children looking at pictures of the past together. Regardless of whether you do or do not understand Japanese, the bonds between people can always be formed. Being in Tokyo the first night was shocking to see all of the pop culture and anime on billboards. It reminded me of things I would see on TV or in Japanese cartoons. However, personally experiencing Tokyo allowed me to truly understand how Japanese culture of cleanliness, humility and stillness are still prevalent in the heart of a city. It is not every day you can experience a city with quiet & clean streets, customer service that puts you first, and culture & traditions, in restaurants.

Group B (Shiga)

◆ The lecture at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was inspiring, because as an international affairs major, working in the Foreign Service is a dream job of mine. I really hope to do something to improve US relations with other countries while being able to learn their language and learn more about different cultures. I was thoroughly impressed by the company culture of La Collina Omihachiman and the attention to details and importance of customers' satisfaction in both La Collina Omihachiman and Omi Brotherhood Company. Their commitment to sustainability reflects Japan's leading role in the world in many different aspects, even in cities that are now yet internationally known. Everywhere we went, when there was a Japanese person hosting us, they were so polite, enthusiastic, welcoming and did everything with purpose. I really could see Japanese society's manners.

◆ I was moved by what I saw in Hino. Everyone I met worked earnestly to keep the town's rich traditions and history alive. More than that I could feel the deep respect, care, and appreciation that each town person felt for one another. Hino faces a plethora of challenges in the modern day; challenges to its livelihood, its traditions, and in the case of population - its very existence. It may seem overwhelming for this small town where everyone seems to know each other. Yet, people like my host family take those challenges on without any hesitation because he loves the town and its people that much. It was their love for home that stood out to me the most. Not just my host family but everyone we met in Omihachiman was so proud and happy to show off their town off to us. I was genuinely inspired; I felt compelled to do all I could to tell stories like my host family to the rest of the world. More than that, I wanted to help personally. One day I hope to meet Mr. N again and see if I could do anything for him and Hino

Group C (Saga)

◆ Visiting Fukuoka and Karatsu have been my favorite experiences. I enjoyed learning more about the koto instrument and the matcha tea ceremony. It has been a dream to play the koto and I was genuinely surprised when we were given that opportunity. I was impressed with the beauty of the match tea ceremony as well as its delicate history. I would have never thought about the pride and diligence that it takes to prepare such a treat for one's guests. In Karatsu, I was given the opportunity to meet with my host mother. I enjoyed visiting natural nature sites and learning about their meanings and significance. I felt welcomed and very prideful for having been shown how to prepare traditional Japanese treats and dinner. I am thankful that I was taught how to use a Japanese calligraphy brush and the kanji for peace. I will forever remember my host mother and I plan to visit her over the summer.

◆ The courtesy call on the Saga government really impressed upon me how excited the Japanese government is to host us this week. I have felt welcomed by every Japanese person I have met so far, from restaurant servers to government officials alike.

School exchange was very informative. Before talking with the Japanese students, I assumed college life and job hunting was the same as it is in America but they shared with me many differences and it made me think about why we do some things that we do in the U.S. It was a unique experience that I would have missed if I came to Japan as a tourist.

5. Voice from Japanese Students/Schools/Host Families/Organizations

◆ Host family (Group A)

They were all really bright, refreshing and gentlemanly. While we were having dinner, the four of them were always talking so heartily that it put us all in a happy mood. And they would always tell us how good the food was. It showed us that even if you can't say everything that you would like to one another, communication is not just words.





◆ Host family (Group B)

All of the kids were so polite and friendly, they really left a great impression on us. It was a great opportunity for exchange and was a very fruitful experience for us as the hosts as well. Thank you very much.

◆ Host family (Group C)

We took in four girls, and they had such calm demeanors that we didn't have anything to worry about. We were all a little anxious about not being able to really speak to one another, but we actually did pretty well using our cell phones and gestures. We also made strawberry daifuku together and we were supposed to roll it on our laps, but it got stuck all over our hands. We all ended up having a pretty good laugh about that.

6. Dissemination by the participants

 <p>Gwendylan Gagne Yesterday at 9:46 PM · Q</p> <p>I am having the most amazing homestay ever in #aomori! My host family own a farm where they grow apples. Everyone is very friendly and they cook extremely well. Hands down the best meal I have had so far. They let us borrow Kimonos for tomorrows dance we are learning and of course gave us fresh apple juice they made themselves! It is 100% apples. Also shout out to my new found friend Yoshiaki Kosaka for being so funny and helping me with my Japanese. I am so grateful to have this opportunity to spend with them, they are such amazing people. #Kakehashi2018 #nanbutown #りんご</p>	 <p>アルバム「Kakehashi Project」</p> <p>Vi Deane-Polyakさんが写真を追加しました — 友達: Spencer Magpuri さん、他9人 場所: 滋賀県 近江八幡市 木曜日 22:07 · Q</p> <p>Group picture from Vories Gakuen in Omihachiman, Shiga prefecture 🇯🇵 I'm so glad I got to enjoy this trip with so many wonderful people! #Kakehashi2018 #Japan #USA #JICE</p>
<p>(Group A)</p> <p>About Homestay (Instagram)</p> <p>I am having the most amazing homestay ever in #aomori! My host family own a farm where they grow apples. Everyone is very friendly and they cook extremely well. Hands down the best meal I have had so far. They let us borrow Kimonos for tomorrows dance we are learning and of course gave us fresh apple juice they made themselves! It is 100% apples. Also shout out to my new found friend Yoshiaki Kosaka for being so funny and helping me with my Japanese. I am so grateful to have this opportunity to spend with them, they are such amazing people</p>	<p>(Group B) About School Exchange (Facebook)</p> <p>Group picture from Vories Gakuen in Omihachiman , Shiga prefecture. I am so glad I got to enjoy this trip with so many people.</p>
 <p>akmagi4154 Today was amazing! We drove around Tokyo, attended orientation and lectures, had wonderful food, and flew to Fukuoka! We have our homestay tomorrow in Saga! In one of the lectures, I was reminded of the importance of the relationships we make over time, and truly how special they are. More pics to come! #kakehashi2018</p>	 <p>cursten_b.howard</p> <p>cursten_b.howard Today was absolutely gorgeous and I met the most amazing and friendly people! 🇯🇵 #angglobal #japan #kakehashi2018</p>
<p>(Group C)</p> <p>About Kakehashi Project (Instagram)</p> <p>Today was amazing! We drove around Tokyo, attended orientation and lectures, had wonderful food, and flew to Fukuoka! We have our homestay tomorrow in Saga in one of the lectures. I was reminded of the importance</p>	<p>(Group C)</p> <p>About Cultural Experience (Instagram)</p> <p>Today was absolutely gorgeous and I met the most amazing and friendly people.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

	
<p>Action Plan(Group A)</p> <p>WHEN? (Date of your uploads) : Most important uploads will be done when we return home and be able to pick the most powerful pictures and messages.</p> <p>HOW? (Which SNS did/will you use? Social media address and/or URL) : Facebook, highlights on Instagram, video-blogging on Youtube, Villanova Japanese Club Facebook page, Ursinus Japanese Club Facebook page, Discord, Reddit, online college pages</p> <p>WHAT? (What did/will you share on SNS?) : Keeping in touch with the people that we meet in Japan, tagging local groups in social media posts and Nanbu Town, create a photo-album with all the images, upload images and videos of our experiences.</p> <p>Low income students who don't have a lot of travel opportunities / Alumni donors for scholarships / Students studying international relations/politics/social sciences</p>	
	
<p>Action Plan(Group B)</p> <p>We will create social media posts at least twice a week that focus on the personal interactions that we had with the Japanese people. We will spread the personal experiences we had with the people of Omi-hachiman and Hino-cho with the people of the United States at relevant events and publications. Some of us will reach out to our widely popular local college radio station and conduct podcasts discussing our experiences in Japan</p> <p>Located in the center of Washington DC, we have access to countless media outlets both in school and outside of it. We will reach out to GW's Japanese Cultural Association to arrange a speaker series at their general body meetings and JapanFest, their annual festival celebrating Japanese culture. We will also contact the GW Hatchet, the school's newspaper to get them to write an article on what we experienced.</p>	<p>Action Plan(Group C)</p> <p>① One student has been recording footage to create a mini-documentary capturing the experience shared by the members of our group which may screen at a film festival in Georgia.</p> <p>② A group of students will also produce pamphlet to prepare future students for study abroad programs in Japan.</p> <p>③ We will also be holding an on—campus event for all UNG students and alumni where they will be able to learn about both our personal experiences in Japan, as well as what we have learned about Japanese history, culture, economy, and innovative technology industry.</p>