



# KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)

## Inbound program for Japanese Americans the 1st Slot

### Program Report

#### 1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, 100 Japanese Americans and supervisors from the U.S. visited Japan from December 13 to December 20, 2018 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: 100 participants,

#### [Prefectures Visited]

Tokyo (All), Nagano (Group A/B, 50 Participants), Wakayama (Group C/D, 50 Participants)

#### 2. Program Schedule

	Group A/B	Group C/D
Dec. 13 (Thu)	[Arrival]	
Dec. 14 (Fri)	[Orientation]	
	[School Exchange] University of Tokyo, Hongo Campus	[Observation] Asakusa, Nakamise-Dori
Dec. 15 (Sat)	[Observation] Japanese Overseas Migration Museum	
	Move to Nagano from Tokyo	Move to Wakayama from Tokyo
Dec. 16 (Sun)	[Cultural Experience] Washi Making [Observation] Iiyama City Museum of Traditional Industry, Folk Museum [Meeting with Host Family]	[Observation] Kumano-Nachi-Taisha [Observation] Mihamacho, America-mura [Meeting with Host Family] [Homestay]

Dec. 17 (Mon)	[Homestay]	[Farewell party with Host Family] [Observation]Kishu Yuasa [Observation]The Fire of Rice Sheaves [Cultural Experience]Japan(lacquer) "Makie" [Observation] Kotonoura OnzanShoen
Dec. 18 (Tue)	[Farewell Party with Host Family] [Workshop]Preparation for presentation	[School Exchange]Wakayama University [Workshop]Preparation for presentation [Farewell Party with All Wakayama People]
Dec. 19 (Wed)	Move to Tokyo from Nagano	Move to Tokyo from Wakayama
	[Observation] Asakusa, Nakamise-Dori [Reporting Session]	[Observation] Imperial Palace Double Bridge
Dec. 20 (Thu)	[Courtesy Call] Mr.Sonoura, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister [Departure]	

### 3. Program Photos

#### All groups (Tokyo)



12/15 [Observation]Japanese Overseas Migration Museum



12/19 [Reporting Session]

#### Group A/B (Nagano)



12/14 [School Exchange] University of Tokyo, Hongo Campus



12/16 [Cultural Experience] Washi Making



12/16[Observation] Folk Museum



12/18 [Farewell Party with Host Family]

### Group C/D (Wakayama)



12/16 [Observation] Mihamacho, America-mura



12/17 [Farewell party with Host Family]



12/17[Cultural Experience]Japan(lacquer)  
"Makie"



12/18 [School Exchange]Wakayama  
University



#### **4. Voice from Participants (abstract)**

##### **Group A (Nagano)**

###### **◆U.S.A. Student**

The Lecture was very entertaining and educational. I learned a lot from the lecture and enjoyed the presentation very much. The school exchange was very interesting. It was interesting to see that the style of building was very gothic that it is an old and prestigious university, and that there are many international students. Many of the students spoke very good English, and I enjoyed talking with them about culture, food, and school. As a Japanese American, I value and view school differently than Japanese students, so talking with them and bonding was a great way to learn. Everything about our homestay was incredible. We ate the most amazing home cooked food and enjoyed the company of our host family with a little knowledge of Japanese google translate, we were able to communicate well. We discussed many things over meals, such as pop culture, politics, school, way of life, basketball, food and even discussed Japanese American incarceration. While the town is small, the people's hearts are very big. We felt loved and valued throughout our entire stay, and we all enjoyed each other's company. I also got to stay in a traditional Japanese-style room with "tatami" and "kotatsu", which I enjoyed. I loved skiing and playing in the snow too, and being in a city with so much snow. I cannot rave about this enough. I enjoyed going on the Shinkansen and bonding with other Nikkeis on the trip as well.

###### **◆U.S.A. Student**

The lecture we had in Tokyo was very interesting because the style of lecture we are used to is much different. I feel that lecture in Japan is much more detailed. The school exchange was striking because it was such a beautiful campus and the students seem very polite and hard working. The company was one of the most interesting parts for me. I have never seen paper making and found the art of it quite beautiful. I would like to try the process again when I go back to the USA. The homestay gave me great insight into Japanese culture. Growing up as a Japanese American, I cherished the ability to better understand the daily life/culture of a Japanese persons. The way of life in Japan seems much more structured and balanced. One thing that I noticed while in Japan was when we were at the immigration museum. Much of the history of the movement of Japanese into areas abroad. Most Japanese have no idea about the history of their ancestors and it makes me want to share this with my fellow Japanese Americans.

##### **Group B (Nagano)**

###### **◆U.S.A. Student**

The lecture taught me useful tips on Japanese culture which helped me navigate difficult interactions throughout. The school exchange showed me that although we are very different from one another, we can still relate through many things, and share a mutual respect for one another. When visiting the paper-making workshop, I learned and understood how

difficult it is to participate in the process. It takes years of tedious work to achieve the level of mastery the workers had, and I now have so much respect for and admiration of them. The home stay was a unique experience that gave me a deeper understanding of the Japanese people. They work so hard, yet are so hospitable and humble. I not only feel a greater connection to them, but will strive to be like them one day.

◆U.S.A. Student

The opening lecture on Japanese society and culture provided me with many useful and specific tips and anecdotes to prepare me to travel in Japan. I especially enjoyed learning about Japan's strong cultural connection to nature and strong traditions based on the change of seasons. The school exchange impressed me with the similarities we found between ourselves and our Japanese peers. Our homestay was the highlight of the trip because I feel that we had the most opportunity to exchange and make connections with our homestay family, and our KAKEHASHI peers in this more focused, intimate time. While driving to the "onsen" to downtown Iiyama, to the Mountain shrines, we could sit next to our host parents and ask them about themselves and about the area. They offered us so much enthusiasm and warmth that I feel we truly gained a family-like connection. I hope to learn Japanese and return to further extend the relationship.

**Group C (Wakayama)**

◆U.S.A. Student

The lecture was very interesting. I got to learn about immigration of Japanese people to other countries and their involvement in planning mega-events and the importance of tourism. It was interesting because it directly relates to me and my family's history. The school exchanged allowed me to interact with college students to know their life in Japan, hobbies and interests. I loved the lacquerware experience the most because it showed me how patient Japanese people are. I cannot imagine waiting 5 years for it to dry and another 6 months to paint. The man was 80 years old and still working at the job he loves. Amazing! The homestay was my favorite. My family lived in the country and worked on their farm. I got to experience a "Goemon buro" bath and traditional foods like "chagayu". One thing I've learned is how respectful everyone in Japan is. They respect their environment, the people, and their country. It was very inspiring and makes me question why more people don't visit Japan.

◆ U.S.A. Student

The lectures during the school exchange were informative and somewhat interesting. I appreciated everyone trying to speak English the best they could. I enjoyed going to the companies like "shoyu" companies and the lacquerware. They shared a lot of how they operate and the significance of what they do. Going to see the painting and process of making lacquerware was unforgettable in the artistic way. We had the opportunity to paint our own which made me realize how difficult it truly was. Best experience here in Japan were the amazing food we ate, to get to live the lifestyle, and to meet amazing people in a place that

I would have never visited otherwise. As a Buddhist, I enjoyed the religious sites we visited and the history of them. I wish we went to more, as religion is a huge part of culture in Japan.

#### **Group D (Wakayama)**

##### **◆Japanese American, Student**

Each lecture was very informative and interesting. The first lecture on Japanese culture was a great review on the lifestyle of Japanese people which helped me understand the locals more on the trip. Another lecture that left an impression is the one of tourism in Japan. I did not know about Japan's recent boom in tourism and the action plans behind the tourism success. I found it special to be able to meet with students in their classroom environment. Not only I was able to talk to them about daily life, but we were able to discuss our opinions on the lectures. It was definitely a more immersive experience. The soy sauce and lacquer companies we visited in Wakayama were impressive how they upheld their traditional operations to create their products. Even though their methods took years of processing, the outcome of their products produce the fruits of their hard work. For the homestay, I loved experiencing the cultural Japanese lifestyle. I wish I could have spent more time with the family to experience more of their daily life.

##### **◆Japanese American, Student**

Out of my memories of Japan, the homestay left the most significant impression. Although my homestay was short, I got to experience Japanese compassion and hospitality. My host mother who is from Inami is a wonderful and caring person. When asked if I had relatives in Wakayama, I had told her that I have relatives in Wakayama, but I did not know where in Wakayama. After telling her my grandparents' last names, she immediately recognized them and called my grandfather's relatives. During the call they asked me a lot of questions to just clarify that I was related to them. I was so excited because they wanted to meet me. My wonderful host mother took me to meet them the next morning and I got to meet my grandfather's brother. After an emotional meeting, I got to show my grandfather's brother pictures of my mother, brother and grandfather. He was so happy to see these pictures and I felt that we were able to make a connection. I was able to find my relatives and my roots thanks to the Kakehashi Program. I have to say that I did learn a lot from all of the other four programs, but nothing was as important with me more than homestay.

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

##### **◆ Host family (Group A/B)**

We felt close to and could become friendly with the college students since they had a connection with Japan. When I asked them what they wanted to do, they all said that they wanted to go skiing. So, we enjoyed a half-day of skiing on the third day. While some of the students had skied before, we gave a skiing lesson to the beginners, who were pleased with the lesson. On the second day, we went to Togakushi Shrine and ate buckwheat noodles. I

think that the students could enjoy Japanese life to the full. Some students even shed tears when we parted, which moved me.

◆ **Host family (Group A/B)**

The college students told us about their family history in detail. I was deeply impressed by the fact that the people of the younger generation respected their ancestors and that the difficulties they faced during the war were handed down from generation to generation. This made me think about the present situation in Japan and what a family should be. We were very glad to meet the young people of Japanese descent who all had a good heart. We cherished our time together.



◆ **Host family (Group C/D)**

We had a really enjoyable and valuable time with them. One of the three students spoke Japanese and we could have deep discussions with them about everything from daily life to American culture and politics. It was lucky for us that they were not children but young adults. One young man enjoyed talking about his brother affectionately, which I found impressive. Another young man told us that his roots were actually from a family who were now living in Shioya in Gobo City and that he even knew the address of the house, which surprised us all. I was so surprised that I couldn't help but suggest taking him to the house the next morning. When I asked them who they knew among the Japanese, they all answered that people who were their family members. I was surprised at that answer. They, of course, are aware that they are American. However, I think that they somehow feel that their roots are in Japan and they have such a strong ethnic identity. Anyway, they caused a lot of excitement and made an impression on us that they were approaching us as equals.

◆ **Student who participated in school exchange program (Group C/D)**






We never had the opportunity to meet any native English speakers, so it was also a good English listening experience. The discussions were enjoyable. I got the impression that the overseas students were eager to communicate with others as I expected. Having heard that the students were of Japanese descent, I thought that many of them would be able to speak Japanese. However, to my surprise, only a few of them spoke Japanese. In the welcome party that night, we had deeper discussions than we could have in the daytime. It was good that we could have a different experience than with the usual overseas students. I felt that it might have been more enjoyable if we had talked to each other about our image in the topic for discussion, if possible.

## **6. Dissemination by the participants**

 <p>「いいね！」 405件 madiwong_ nothing but warm and fuzzies for my amazing homestay experience and the friendships cultivated in nagano! thank you, oono... 続きを読む コメント 6件すべてを表示</p>	 <p>bthekakehashi Making our own washi paper was definitely a highlight of our visit to Nagano! The water was super cold but we can't wait to see our finished masterpieces 🥰 Thank you for teaching us</p>
<p>(Group A) About the homestay(Instagram)</p> <p>Nothing but warm and fuzzies for my amazing homestay experience and the friendships cultivated in Nagano! Thank you, my host family for spoiling us and taking us in as your own. A piece of my heart will always be in those beautiful, snow-capped mountains in Nihon.</p>	<p>(Group B) About the cultural experience(Instagram)</p> <p>Making our new washi paper was definitely a highlight of our visit to Nagano! The water was super cold but we can't wait to have our finished masterpieces. Thank you for teaching us.</p>
<p>Kakehashi Fam C in front of the Imperial Palace. What a dazzling group. 翻訳を見る</p> 	<p>Visited the Nachi Taisha Shrine and saw the tallest waterfall in Japan. The whole area was breathtakingly beautiful. #kakehashi2018 #nachifalls @ Nachi Falls</p> 
<p>(Group C) About the observation (Facebook)</p> <p>Kakehashi Group C in Imperial Palace. What a dazzling group</p>	<p>(Group D) About the observation (Facebook)</p> <p>Visited the Nachi Taisha Shrine and saw the tallest waterfall in Japan. The whole area was breathtakingly beautiful.</p>

## 7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session



<div data-bbox="240 165 767 465"> <h2>ACTION PLAN</h2> <h3>When?</h3> <p><b>When:</b> From now through March 2019, as a group, we will...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make personalized stickers (Kyra: Feb 2019, through Red Bubble)</li> <li>2. Write articles for JACL Chapters (Grace, Kristina, Justin K. Ryudo, Kyle, Mariah, and Kraig: Jan 15, 2019)</li> <li>3. Present experiences at individual schools (Kyra, Nicole, Mark, Kraig, Reed, Justin K, Akira, Kyle, and Kelly: March 2019)</li> <li>4. Make Promotional Videos (Akira, Esther, Madi, Justin D, Reed, Nicole, and Ashley: April 2019)</li> <li>5. Social Media Campaign (Everyone: over the next 3 months) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 3 posts total</li> <li>o Completed over the span of 3 months; one post a month.</li> <li>o Themed &amp; Group Instagram</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <div data-bbox="614 398 718 454"> <p>Social Media Hashtags  #Tokyo #Japan  #Nagano #Kakohashi2018  #NatsukashiNihon  #BestGroupCv8</p> </div> </div>	<div data-bbox="810 165 1342 465">  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an all accessible curated gallery via Instagram &amp; Facebook that all Group B members contribute to, sharing memories, ideas, and lessons learned.</li> <li>• At least one post per person each month for 3 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each person assigned a specific day of the month</li> <li>• Post types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before - what inspired you to come to Japan, family history, previous impressions</li> <li>• During - pictures and findings from this trip</li> <li>• After - how the trip influenced you</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Begin on January 1, 2019</li> </ul> </div>
<p><b>Action Plan(Group A)</b></p> <p><b>When:</b> From now through March 2019, as a group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make personalized stickers (by a Group A member: Feb 2019, through Red Bubble)</li> <li>• Write articles for JACL Chapters (by 7 Group A members: Jan 15, 2019)</li> <li>• Present experiences at individual schools (by 9 Group A members: March 2019)</li> <li>• Make promotional videos (by 7 Group A members: April 2019)</li> <li>• Social Media Campaign (Everyone: over the next 3 months): 3 posts total and completed over the span of 3 months; 1post/month Themed &amp; Group Instagram</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action Plan(Group B)</b></p> <p>We will create an all accessible curated gallery via Instagram &amp; Facebook that all Group B members contribute to sharing memories, ideas, and lessons learned. Each person will at least post one time each month for 3 months. Post types are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Before: What inspired you to come to Japan, family History, previous impressions.</li> <li>2.During: Pictures and findings from this trip.</li> <li>3.After: How the trip influenced you.</li> </ol> <p>We will begin on Jan. 1, 2019</p>
<div data-bbox="240 1276 767 1574"> <h3>PLAN LOGISTICS (FILM): ISZAC GATON</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The film will be a 10 minute video and will depict brief clips of stories and discoveries from our time in Japan</li> <li>• Video will be comprised of footage taken in Japan and interview clips taken after returning to the States</li> <li>• No copyright music</li> <li>• Interviews will be prompted by questions such as: How did your initial perception of Japan evolve? What moment left the biggest impression on you? What impact has this trip had on your Japanese American identity?</li> <li>• Three editors: myself, Dylan Murakami, and Lars Christensen. Discuss flow of narrative and aesthetics of the overall video. Divide workload and produce a rough draft at the end of January. Fine tune the video by the end of next month.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="240 1529 759 1574"> <p>INTRODUCTION   PERSONAL ANECDOTES   TEAM MISSION   <u>PLAN LOGISTICS</u>   CLOSING</p> </div> </div>	<div data-bbox="810 1276 1342 1514"> <h3>Clubs/Organizations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hawaii Pacific Islander Club</li> <li>- NSU (Nikkei Student Union)</li> <li>- JACL (Japanese American Citizens League)</li> <li>- YPC (Young Professionals Caucus)</li> <li>- JAYS (Japanese American Youths)</li> <li>- Buddhist Temples</li> <li>- Japanese Language Classes</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="834 1447 1305 1503">    </div> </div>
<p><b>Action Plan(Group C)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The film will be a 10 minute video and will depict brief clips of stories and discoveries from our time in Japan.</li> <li>• Video will be comprise of footage taken in Japan and interview clips taken after returning to the states</li> <li>• No copyright music</li> <li>• Interviews will be prompted by questions such as: How did your initial perception of</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action Plan(Group D)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate friends and family through social media by presenting Japan with photos of our experiences while in Japan.</li> <li>• When giving “omiyage” to friends and family we will explain the significance of these gifts.</li> <li>• Share our experiences with others in our clubs/student organizations or through a campus event at our universities.</li> </ul>

<p>Japan evolve? What moment left the bigger impression on you? What impact has this trip had on your Japanese American identity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss flow of narrative and aesthetics of the overall video. Divide workload and produce a rough draft at the end of January. Fine tune the video by the end of next month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about our own culture. Learn from each other what it means to be Japanese American and how our ancestor's experiences have affected us through activities at JACL and building connections with other Japanese Americans in their community.</li> <li>• Bring our families back to Japan to show them the rich culture and history in Japan.</li> <li>• Build new connections to Japan including unfound relatives.</li> <li>• Maintain connections with the people we met in Japan through our exchanged contact.</li> </ul> <p><b>WHEN : (When will it be done?)</b> After we go back to America. (Shortly after December 20<sup>th</sup> or longer if a bigger event.)</p> <p><b>WHO : (Who will do it?)</b> Takehashi participants in group D</p> <p><b>WHO : (To whom?)</b> Friends and family (both non-Japanese and Japanese Americans), school, communities in our hometown.</p>
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