



KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)
Outbound Program for KAKEHASHI Inouye 2nd Slot
Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, 25 Japanese university students and their supervisor visited the United States of America from February 24 to March 3, 2019 to participate in the program aimed at promoting the understanding of Japan with regard to its politics, economy, society, culture, history, and foreign policy.

During the school exchange program, they delivered a presentation and performance to introduce the attractiveness of Japan. Through the observation of various sites, the participants enjoyed a wide range of opportunities to improve their understanding of the US and Japan-US relations, and shared their individual interests and experiences through social media. Based on their findings and experience in the US, each group of participants made a presentation in the final session and reported on the action plans to be implemented after returning to Japan.

【School Names and Number of Participants】

Meijo University: 25 participants

【Destination】

U.S.A. [California]

2. Program Schedule

Feb.24 (Sun)	【Arrival】
Feb.25 (Mon)	【Orientation】 【Lecture】 JINS Eyewear US, Inc. 【Courtesy Call】 Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco 【Observation】 Pier 39 【Observation】 Military Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center 【Observation】 Japan town
Feb.26 (Tue)	【Observation of Nonprofit Organization】 Redwood Empire Food Bank 【Observation】 The Olive Press in Sonoma 【Observation】 Mission San Francisco Solano 【Observation】 Sonoma Plaza
Feb.27 (Wed)	【School Exchange】 Sonoma State University
Feb.28 (Thu)	【Observation】 University of California, Berkeley 【Workshop】
Mar.1 (Fri)	【Reporting Session】 【Farewell Party】 【Observation】 Westfield San Francisco Centre

Mar.2 (Sat) 【Departure】
 Mar.3 (Sun) 【Arrival in Japan】

3. Program Photos



February 25 【Courtesy Call】 Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco



February 25 【Lecture】 JINS Eyewear US, Inc.



February 25 【Observation】 Military Intelligence Service, Historic Learning Center



February 25 【Observation of Nonprofit Organization】 Redwood Empire Food Bank



February 27 【School Exchange】 Sonoma State University



March1 【Reporting Session】

4. Voice from Participants (abstract)

◆ University Student

I was surprised to see that students in the U.S. have pride in their own country, regions, and universities. While it is sort of embarrassing for students in Japan to wear clothes that have their university logo on it, students in the U.S. seemed to have full confidence in doing so with pride, which looked very cool. In addition, I was overwhelmed as they quite confidently taught me many things about the U.S. when I asked about it. As I was not familiar with the details of my own country and people's livelihood in general, I was in a panic and could not fully talk about the attractiveness of Japan when they asked about it. However, after our visit to the U.S., I realized their cultural diversity, and came to have pride in Japan's "professionalism," state-of-the-art technologies, and fascinating nature. I would like to steadily deepen my understanding of Japan so that I can confidently say that I love Japan when we invite them to Japan. Moreover, since students in the U.S. also use the Internet to a considerable extent, I will keep disseminating information by using SNS as a way to disseminate the attractiveness of Japan to a wide audience. Prior to our visit to the U.S., I had a vague but strong fondness towards the U.S. as I believed that the music, fashion, economy, abundance of nature, and freedom in the U.S. outweighed those of Japan. And just as I imagined, the U.S. has been more advanced than I expected, which was overwhelming. However, I also came to notice the wonders of Japan, which I used to think was nothing special, and I also came to think that countries are not supposed to be compared with each other. One disappointing thing is that although Japanese athletes have been attracting attention and Japanese comics and cartoons are gaining popularity worldwide, local students in the U.S. did not have a specific image of Japan when I asked them about it, which was regrettable and made me think of all the wonderful features of Japan they are missing out on. As the 2020 Tokyo Olympics are approaching, Japan will gain more attention from all over the world. Without wasting this great opportunity, I would like to continuously become a Kakehashi between Japan and the world.

◆ University Student

This KAKEHASHI Project was a great opportunity to see Japan from overseas. As I saw my own environment from the standpoint of the world to which I do not belong, I came to see the good points of Japan that I never paid attention to, and quite frankly didn't think were very special. Conversely, I also came to see some issues. During a lecture at a company, we were told not to think that it is normal to see fully crowded trains. There are traffic jams in California as well, and the government has been taking initiatives to address the issue. With regard to not only cars and crowded trains, but also issues around us, I felt that it is important to not just see such issues as ordinary matters, but to take initiatives to address them. In addition, companies change the names of products in line with the U.S. market. The idea that objects can be altered so as to be accepted in the

various localities was quite interesting. I felt that this can also be applied to things around me in Japan. When I work in the future, I think that it is important to respond to foreign people in a manner suitable to them in order to convey my opinions and thoughts to them; therefore, I feel that learning English and foreign cultures is essential to prepare for that time. This project also allowed me to once again realize that English is a valuable tool.

5. Voices from the Students/Schools/Organizations

◆ Student who participated in the school exchange program

The presentations that were presented from the Japanese students on the first day was wonderful. It was very eye opening to see what the Japanese people were like. I was able to have a little foresight of what Japan will be like from the presentations that talked about Japan's unique products, performing arts, calligraphy and pop culture.

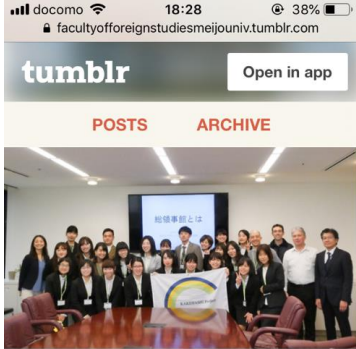
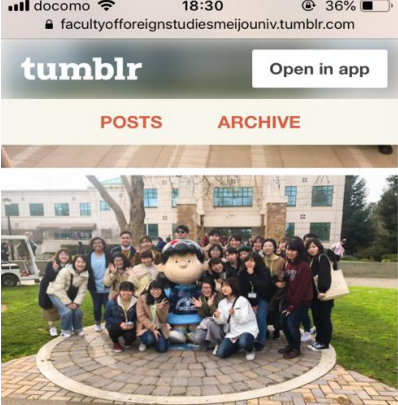
◆ Student who participated in the school exchange program

I was very impressed by the students' English fluency and their ability to express themselves in the language. I am inspired to reciprocate their efforts by learning some Japanese phrases. The exchange program has impressed upon me the importance of building bridges with other cultures and countries.

◆ Student who participated in the school exchange program

The student presentations were very insightful and informative. I was able to broaden my knowledge about Japanese customs and the similarities and differences amongst two different cultures. Their visit opened their eyes to the things they are grateful for in Japan.

6. Dissemination by participants

 <p>2019.2.25 平成30年度対日理解促進交流プログラム「カケハシ・プロジェクト」～2日目～</p> <p>カケハシ・プロジェクト2日目の午前中は、サンフランシスコにある日本総領事館へ視察に行き、実際の仕事内容や活動について学びました。また、そこでは日系企業のJINS Eyewearの新井氏から、アメリカと日本のビジネス文化の違いを学びました。</p>	 <p>2019.2.27 平成30年度対日理解促進交流プログラム「カケハシ・プロジェクト」～4日目～</p> <p>本日は、Sonoma State University (SSU) のキャンパスを巡り、様々な文化体験を行いました。また、SSUの学生と交流し、日本の文化について学びました。</p>
<p>About KAKEHASHI Project (Facebook)</p> <p>In the morning, we visited the Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco and we learned about the content of their work and activities in which they are involved. In addition, we had a chance to talk with Mr. Arai who is a president at JINS Eyewear US, Inc. He told us the difference between the business style of the United States (CA) and Japan, and he also gave us advice for our futures. In the afternoon, we went to the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) Historic Learning Center and we gained knowledge of the life and history of Japanese-Americans in the concentration camps. It was a great opportunity to learn something new and see Japan from various points of view.</p>	<p>About School Exchange (tumblr)</p> <p>Today, we made our presentations at Sonoma State University. The first group introduced unique Japanese products such as the Randosel, the Bento, and the Washlet Toilet with all of the necessary Japanese cultural background. The next group presented Japanese traditional arts which included Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki, and Bunraku. The third group performed Japanese calligraphy with SSU students. The last group danced Wotagei and explained about Otaku-culture. I think we did really well and that all of our practice really payed off. Also, we deepened our exchange with the SSU students and staff, and had a very full and fun day.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session



Action Plan1

By utilizing social media, we will disseminate the knowledge and experiences that we have acquired through the KAKEHASHI Project by compiling them into videos and pictures and sharing them with as many people as possible. As many of the experiences that we had in the U.S. were experiences that we cannot have in Japan, the compilation of these experiences brought us valuable discoveries that can lead to new perspectives. As we disseminate the various things that we have come to realize, we believe that we can have a favorable impact on followers who have the same sensitivities and interests.



Action Plan2

By using lunch breaks and after school hours, we will present what we felt and noticed through the KAKEHASHI Project to students at our university. We will disseminate the differences that we have noticed between the U.S. and Japan as well, as the attractiveness of Japan and the U.S. can be grasped through such differences. Moreover, as one of the features of Japanese pop culture that is gaining popularity worldwide, we will demonstrate Wotagei, a type of dance performed by fans of Japanese idol singers.