



KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)
Outbound Program for Jewish Studies Researchers
Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, 10 Japanese researchers visited the United States of America from March 17 to March 24, 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 as well as Jewish studies in Japan.

During the exchange program, they delivered a presentation and exchanged opinions on Jewish studies in 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.

【School Names and Number of Participants】

10 Jewish Studies Researchers (from University of Tokyo Graduate School etc.)

【Destination】

U.S.A. [Los Angeles and San Francisco, California]

2. Program Schedule

Mar.17(Sun)	【Arrival】
	【Orientation】
	【Observation】 Skirball Cultural Center
Mar.18(Mon)	【Observation】 Temple Israel of Hollywood
	【School Exchange①】 Hebrew Union College
	【Observation】 Pico Union Project
	【Observation】 Wilshire Boulevard Temple
	【Observation】 American Jewish Committee (AJC) Los Angeles Office
Mar.19(Tue)	【Observation】 Simeon Wiesenthal Center
	【Observation】 Museum of Tolerance
	【School Exchange②】 University of California, Los Angeles
	【Courtesy Call】 Consulate-General of Japan in Los Angeles
Mar.20(Wed)	【School Exchange③】 Milken Community Schools
	Move to San Francisco from Los Angeles
	【Exchange program】 AJC's Purim Holiday Celebration



Mar.21(Thu) 【Observation】 Holocaust Center
 【Observation】 Emanu-El synagogue
 【Courtesy Call】 Shlomi Korman, Israel's Consul General to the Pacific Northwest
 【Observation】 Contemporary Jewish Museum
 【Observation】 San Francisco Jewish Community Center
 【Exchange program】 ACCESS Young Leaders from AJC

Mar.22(Fri) 【School Exchange④】 San Francisco State University
 【Exchange program】 Anti-Defamation League
 【Exchange program】 Lehrhaus Judaica
 【Observation】 Adamah Jewish Farm
 【Individual Research】
 【Exchange program】 Congregation Beth El (Service & Shabbath Dinner)

Mar.23(Sat) 【Exchange program】 Congregation Kol Emeth (Service & Lunch with congregation)
 【Departure】

Mar.24(Sun) 【Arrival in Japan】

3. Program Photos

	
<p>March 18 【Observation】 Wilshire Boulevard Temple</p>	<p>March 19 【Observation】 Simeon Wiesenthal Center</p>

	
<p>March 19 【School Exchange】 University of California, Los Angeles</p>	<p>March 20 【Exchange program】 AJC's Purim Holiday Celebration</p>
	
<p>March 22 【Observation】 Adamah Jewish Farm</p>	<p>March 22【Exchange program】Congregation Beth El</p>

4. Voice from Participants (abstract)

◆ I think we were able to appeal to the people we met at several places we visited in the U.S. that there are researchers /students in Japan who are engaged in Jewish studies. Many people seemed interested in our delegation. Some of the people we met said that they used to study or work in Japan. I realized the strong relationship between Japan and the U.S. On the other hand, it is true that not many Japanese are interested in or understand Judaism or the Jewish people. In fact, I was surprised that the lecture at Anti-Defamation League included the topic of anti-Semitism in Japan. We should avoid slipping into self-complacency even if people are interested in us, rather, we should be interested in others and try to understand them well.

◆ Throughout the program, I encountered several occasions where Jewish people in the west coast put great importance on “Openness” and “Education” as common values among the Jewish communities. The most impressive phrase I heard was “Jewish place for everyone”. A gentleman said the phrase unintentionally. In this case, “everyone” includes not only Jewish people with variety of origins, but also includes other religious communities or ethnic communities. The activities held in Jewish communities consciously involve the connections with many local communities. In fact, many people from other affiliations are commonly seen at variety of places such as Jewish schools, seminars, training facilities, even at Jewish religious ceremonies such as Sabbath and Purim Holiday Celebrations. At some venues we visited, the topic of anti-Semitism, which is currently an issue in the U. S. or Europe was on the agenda. The hatred to others is a problem related to the hate speeches in Japan. When we wonder how to address the issue as a society, the people in the U.S. insisted that education is a pivotal solution. Education is necessary to help young people gain an attitude to draw interest in other cultures, to learn and understand others. As a person who is engaged in higher education, I also believe in the power of education, which fosters the spirits and actions to understand others.

◆ Including some aspects regarding the development of a Kosher-friendly environment, I had opportunities to directly learn the ideas and thoughts of the local Jewish people. I am sure that these experiences will be useful at several occasions where Japan will host Jewish people in the near future. We are going to host the Olympic games in Tokyo next year in 2020 as well as the Osaka/Kansai Japan Expo in 2025. One of the national issues we face is how to improve the inbound tourism environment. With the predicted increase of inbound tourists from overseas, not only should we establish measures to increase the foreigners’ affinity toward Japan, but also to understand their preferences so as to incentivize spending during their stay. Unfortunately, the current situation is not yet sufficient for these pursuits. Even the obvious and common measures for them do not exist yet. That is the current situation in Japan and that is what I learned during my stay in the U. S. Now, thanks to this trip, I think I realized what issues I should work on as one of the researchers of Jewish study in Japan.



5. Voices from the Students/Schools/Organizations

◆ Very impressive group – great questions pulling from unique backgrounds. We were fascinated by the delegation’s background in Jewish history, culture, and languages, and joked that they knew more about Judaism than most Jews. They were exposed to and engaged with various aspects of Jewish life, history, and practice in Los Angeles. The Jewish community is extremely diverse and I think they were able to see and experience that diversity firsthand, and plan to use it in their future studies and careers.

◆ It was fascinating to meet Japanese scholars who study Jewish studies. I feel it is important to meet and discuss people from other culture because it helps us better

understand ourselves. This was a great experience.

6. Dissemination by participants

	
<p>About Day 5 (Facebook)</p> <p>We visited Holocaust Center of San Francisco, Congregation, Emanu-El, Contemporary Jewish Museum, lunch with Shlomi Kofman, Consul General of Israel, Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, a meeting with Tomochika Uyama, Consul General of Japan. Dinner with ACCESS members from AJC. We learned secular Jewish cultures and social activities in San Francisco. I heard a saying, "Jewish place for everyone," and a word "Acceptance". In the dinner, I talked not only with Jewish members but also a Muslim. His story was really impressive as a scene of life in San Francisco.</p>	<p>About Exchange program (Facebook)</p> <p>After visiting some community centers, synagogues, colleges and universities, schools, and Consulate General of Japan in L.A., we arrived in San Francisco yesterday. It was fun and interesting to celebrate Purim with local community members.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

<p><u>Action Plan 1</u></p> <p>We will create and promote a newsletter about the “KAKEHASHI Project” and our experiences in the program. We will send it to MOFA, Implementing Organization, AJC Los Angeles, Jewish research institutes in Japan as well as each institute we visited in the US. We will also hand it out to AJC members at a meeting such as dinner gathering when they visit Japan.</p>	<p><u>Action Plan 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of understandings of Jewish culture among research colleagues <p>To the members of Kyoto Association of Jewish Thought</p> <p>Report the experiences of the program and share the knowledge about the Jewish community in the west coast of the US at the research trip of the above association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of understandings of Jewish culture in academic institutes <p>Report the experiences of the program and distribute the newsletter at the conference to be held by the Center for Interdisciplinary Study of Monotheistic Religions (CISMOR) as well as at the meeting of Kyoto Association of Jewish Thought</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar for citizens <p>To participants of the seminar of Japan Society for Jewish Studies in Kobe</p> <p>Report the experiences of the program at the above public seminar.</p>
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