



KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)

Inbound program for University Students the 1st Slot

Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, 50 university students and supervisors from the U.S. visited Japan from December 15 to December 22, 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: 50 participants

(Breakdown)

Group A (25 participants): Talladega College (State of Alabama)

Group B (25 participants): The University of Tennessee (State of Tennessee)

[Prefectures Visited]

Tokyo (All), Gunma (Group A), Hyogo (Group B)

2. Program Schedule

	Group A	Group B
12/15(Sun)	【Arrival】	
12/16(Mon)	【Orientation】 【Lecture】 Dr. KIMURA Hideo, Executive Managing Director, Strategic International Management Associates (SIMA)	
	Move to Gunma from Tokyo	Move to Hyogo from Tokyo
12/17(Tue)	【School Exchange】 Takasaki University of Commerce 【Observation】 Takasaki Byakue Dai-Kannon 【Meeting with Host Family】	【Observation】 Shoshazan Engyo-ji Temple 【Observation】 Himeji Castle

12/18(Wed)	【Homestay】	【Observation】 Kikkoman Food Co., Ltd. Takasago Factory 【Observation】 Bridge Exhibition Center, Maiko Marine Promenade 【Meeting with Host Family】
12/19(Thu)	【Farewell Party with Host Family】 【Cultural Experience】 Japanese Textile Museum "YUKARI"	【Farewell Party with Host Family】 【School Exchange】 Konan University
	【Workshop】	
12/20(Fri)	Move to Tokyo from Gunma	Move to Tokyo from Hyogo
	【Reporting Session】	
12/21(Sat)	【Observation】 Meiji Jingu Shrine & Harajuku 【Observation】 Sona Area Tokyo, Mega Web	
12/22(Sun)	【Observation】 Asakusa 【Departure】	

3. Program Photos

All (Tokyo)



12/16 【Orientation】



12/20 【Reporting Session】

Group A (Gunma)



12/17 【School Exchange】
Takasaki University of Commerce



12/18 【Homestay】 chopping wood



12/19 【Farewell Party with Host Family】



12/19 【Cultural Experience】
Japanese Textile Museum "YUKARI"

Group B (Hyogo)



12/17 【Observation】 Himeji Castle



12/17 【Observation】 Shoshazan Engyo-ji Temple



12/18 【 Observation 】 Bridge Exhibition Center, Maiko Marine Promenade



12/19 【School Exchange】 Konan University

4. Voice from Participants (abstract)

Group A (Gunma)

◆ The lecture was extremely informative. I learned many things in regard to the Japanese Culture. The school exchange was my favorite program. It allowed us to fellowships with our peers as we learned from them and they learned from us. We formed bonds that can last a lifetime. The homestay program was my most eye-opening experience. I saw the beauty of Japan and its people for what it truly is and what they truly are. I loved every single part of

Kakehashi Project 2019. I'm so blessed and happy to say that I was a part of it. I could never be more grateful.

◆ Each session was different and extremely informative. In the lecture, we learned many facts about Japan, for example, you can buy a share into a castle and be part-owner in efforts to help preserve Japan's very historic buildings. The school exchange was one of my favorite activities during this trip. The students were so pleasant and were very interested in America and our culture. I even exchanged my social media information with some of the students. The home stay was by far the highlight of my trip! My home stay "father" was the absolute best!

Group B (Hyogo)

◆ I found the lecture to be interesting and even learned things during it that I never knew even though I'm a Japanese minor. So I loved it! The school exchange was a very cool experience, especially when we sat in on a Japanese class and experienced how they learn. The students were welcoming and conversed with us as they could while practicing their English and us practicing our Japanese. Visiting Kikkoman was very interesting due to the fact that their soy sauce is one of the most known Japanese products in America. The tour guide was great and explained the manufacturing process well, and gave me a better appreciation of Japanese companies. The homestay was easily my favorite part of the program. My host family was so kind and it truly made me feel as close to the Japanese people as I ever have. I learned a lot culturally and linguistically, and made connections that will last a lifetime. Visiting points of interest such as Himeji Castle and the world's longest suspension bridge was very cool and educational. I love history so it was great to see these places in person and capture photos to post on my social media.

◆ The lecture helped me understand how the Japanese culture has gotten to where it is now and how much the Japanese people have endured over the centuries. The school exchange helped me understand how Japanese college students go about their day and that extra curricular activities are very important to Japanese society. Going to Kikkoman provided a lot of insight as to how soy sauce is made. We also learned that many industries in Japan have to import raw material from foreign countries in order to make finished products. The home stay was one of the best parts of the Kakehashi program. The host family was incredibly nice and gracious. I would love for them to come visit me in Tennessee. I understand Japanese home life better because of them. Having free time after dinner is enjoyable and also very knowledgeable. Many of us spent our free time walking around the cities and getting to know how Japanese cities are laid out. We also got to experience an onsen which was very enlightening.

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

◆ Student who participated in the school exchange

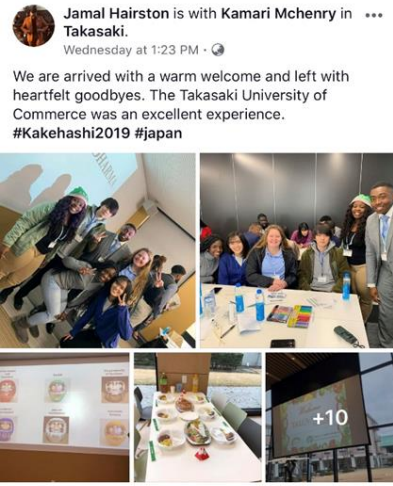

Our exchange meeting with the students of Talladega College was mainly focused on free

discussions, and it was a good opportunity to see how much I could use my current English ability. We talked together about each other's university, hobbies, and the like. During the lunch time, students from Talladega College taught us a trendy dance, and we got pumped up. In the presentation, I talked about Japanese food culture (the manner of using chopsticks). I was very happy and confident at the moment my English was understood and I could understand others. I would like to thank those who organized such a meeting and make use of it in my student life from now on.

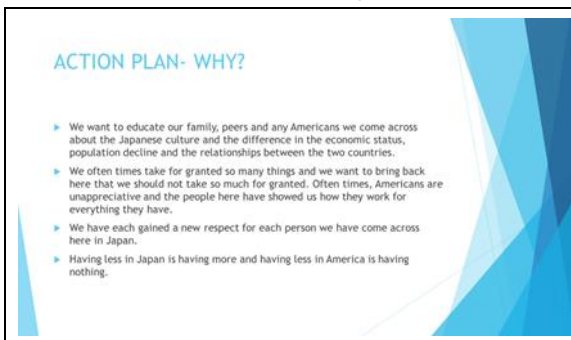

◆ Host family

Although it was a short period, it was good, as they were very nice and gentle students. Children were able to interact through activities such as games, origami, and playing cards. The group was very calm, and my impression of the University of Tennessee was very good.

5. Dissemination by the participants

 <p>Jamal Hairston is with Kamari Mchenry in Takasaki. Wednesday at 1:23 PM · 🌐</p> <p>We are arrived with a warm welcome and left with heartfelt goodbyes. The Takasaki University of Commerce was an excellent experience. #Kakehashi2019 #japan</p> <p>41 Likes · 3 Comments · 1 Share</p> <p>Like Comment Share</p>	 <p>Isaac Russell Yesterday at 23:07 · 🌐</p> <p>Extremely fun day today! Ended the short homestay, and got to do a mini exchange with students at 甲南大学! (Konan University) I was able to help a few students in their English classes and chat with some as well! All of the students were extremely nice and helpful, which is the culture that is here in Japan! We also got to watch Konan students play the Taiko drums (video soon, it was amazing) and I even participated in a Japanese tea ceremony! The ceremony was very intricate, each movement symbolizing something different. Amazing day today.</p> <p>#kakehashi2019 #utkglobal @utknnoxville #japan #USA #JICE</p> <p>25 Reactions · 4 Comments</p> <p>Love Comment</p>
<p>About the school exchange (Facebook)</p> <p>We are arrived with a warm welcome and left with heartfelt goodbyes. The Takasaki University of Commerce was an excellent experience.</p>	<p>About the school exchange (Facebook)</p> <p>Extremely fun day today! Ended the short homestay, and got to do a mini exchange with students at Konan University! I was able to help a few students in their English classed and chat with some as well! All of the students were extremely nice and helpful, which is the culture that is here in Japan! We also got to watch Konan students play the Taiko drums (video soon, it was amazing) and I even participated in a Japanese tea ceremony. The ceremony was very intricate, each movement symbolizing something different. Amazing day today.</p>

6. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

 <p>ACTION PLAN- WHY?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ We want to educate our family, peers and any Americans we come across about the Japanese culture and the difference in the economic status, population decline and the relationships between the two countries. ▶ We often times take for granted so many things and we want to bring back here that we should not take so much for granted. Often times, Americans are unappreciative and the people here have showed us how they work for everything they have. ▶ We have each gained a new respect for each person we have come across here in Japan. ▶ Having less in Japan is having more and having less in America is having nothing. 	<p>Action Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to (international) college community • Get involved in different study abroad/international events • Petition for similar program for Japanese students in the US • Speak to at-risk youths about the possibilities of going abroad 
<p>Action Plan (Group A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We plan on telling everyone about our trip when we get home, our friends, family and peers. We also plan our going to local elementary schools. • To go into more depth, we have talked about putting together a PowerPoint and presentation for our international week. International week at our school is a huge deal so to tell people about our trip will make them more interested and more open to the Japanese culture. Our school is not accustomed to the Japanese culture because we do not have any students from the country. We feel as if international week would be a great time for this. Another time we will talk about our experience is within our majors. We have discussed that there is a way that we can relate our trip to each major so once we get back to school we can decide a time to do a school wide, major Japan presentation. • We will also incorporate the culture in career pathways, cafeteria and helping students study abroad. 	<p>Action Plan (Group B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to (international) college community. • Get involved in different study abroad/international events. • Petition for similar program for Japanese students in the US. Speak to at-risk youths about the possibilities of going abroad.