



## **KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)**

### **Inbound program for Okinawa Program the 2nd Slot**

### **Program Report**

#### **1. Program Overview**

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Programs, 25 high school students and supervisors from the U.S. visited Japan from December 18 to December 25, 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: 25 participants

#### **[Prefectures Visited]**

Tokyo, Okinawa

#### **2. Program Schedule**

12/18 (Wed)	<b>【Arrival】</b>
12/19 (Thu)	<b>【Orientation】</b> <b>【Lecture】</b> Japanese Language Communication, Ms. TOKANO Mari Move to Okinawa from Tokyo
12/20 (Fri)	<b>【School Exchange】</b> Okinawa Prefectural Kaiho Senior High School <b>【Meeting with Host Family】</b>
12/21 (Sat)	<b>【Homestay】</b>
12/22 (Sun)	<b>【Farewell Party with Host Family】</b> <b>【Observation, Lecture】</b> Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum, Testimony of the War Survivor, Peace Memorial Park <b>【Cultural Experience】</b> Eisa Traditional Dance
12/23 (Mon)	<b>【Workshop】</b> Move to Tokyo from Okinawa
12/24 (Tue)	<b>【Observation】</b> Panasonic Center Tokyo <b>【Observation】</b> Edo Tokyo Museum <b>【Observation】</b> Senso-ji Temple, Nakamise

12/25 (Wed)	<b>【Reporting Session】</b> <b>【Departure】</b>
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### 3. Program Photos



12/19 **【Lecture】** Japanese Language Communication, Ms. TOKANO Mari



12/20 **【School Exchange】** Okinawa Prefectural Kaiho Senior High School



12/22 **【Observation, Lecture】** Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum, Testimony of the War Survivor, Peace Memorial Park



12/22 **【Culture Experience】** Eisa Traditional Dance



12/24 **【Observation】**  
Panasonic Center Tokyo



12/25 **【Reporting Session】**

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

◆ Japanese schools are very different from US schools but certain subjects are the same. I was able to meet a lot of people and I had a lot of fun. We visited the Okinawa Peace Memorial Museum. I learned a lot about the battle of Okinawa and the suffering people endured, but also about the hope for peace and prevention of more suffering. There was a strong theme that transcended all cultures and languages. The actual museum exhibition was well thought out and the artwork was beautiful. It gave a realistic view of what life was like for the people of Okinawa. The memorial was serene and peaceful: a wonderful tribute to the souls (may they rest in peace). The homestay was amazing and very informative about Okinawan culture and life. The traditional Okinawan dance performed by the university students was very interesting and very fun. Altogether the programs were enjoyable and provided an intriguing and realistic view of Okinawa and Japan.

◆ The lecture on the history of war in Okinawa was really informative and shed light on the trials of Okinawa people. The school exchange was incredible, being able to talk with people my age from a different culture. The lecture at MOFA was a really fun experience. It was great to go over important phrases and the expectations through the lecture. The home stay was amazing and super informative. I learned a lot about family and home dynamics. The cultural experience was absolutely amazing and one of my favorite parts! The Okinawa university students were incredibly nice and welcoming.

◆ The lecture that we attended was very entertaining and informative. It reinforced my understanding of common Japanese phrases that I should be using in various situations. I was also impressed by the scope of the program and its impact on relations between our countries. The school exchange, though only one day, was incredibly enlightening and enjoyable. The morning assembly, where they showed the traditional dance, the amazing xylophone performance, and sang the school's anthem was entertaining and interesting. The art class where we made wood block stamps was difficult, but enjoyable. It showed the kind of work that students are putting in daily, and how impressive it is. In our homeroom classes, I was surprised by how friendly all the students were with each other, and with the teacher too. I ended the day with music classes, and I was super impressed by the students' skills at their respective instruments, such as the piano or clarinet. While I was there, they didn't show many large group cooperation aside from the traditional Okinawan dance at the assembly. This leads me to believe that Japanese schools focus more on individualism, but I might be wrong on this. I was incredibly moved by the homestay program. My host family was incredibly kind to me, and showed me many amazing sights that I will remember my whole life. The aquarium I went to was super interesting, and the many stores I saw was fun as well. The war stories I heard from the Okinawa Peace Center was chilling, where I heard of the pain that people had to go through in the Battle of Okinawa.

## 5. Voice from Japanese Students/Schools/Host Families/Organizations (abstract)



### ◆ Student who participated in the school exchange

After I visited the United States on this project and interacted with Curtis High School students, I have really been looking forward to them coming to our high school. The students from Curtis High School were much quieter than when I met them in the United States, but as we talked, they became more sociable with everyone in our class. I also accepted them as homestays so we were able to spend the weekend together. We were able to talk a lot while playing games and shopping, which deepened our mutual understanding. The distance between the United States and Okinawa is very large and we can't meet easily, but I want to get in touch with them on social media.

### ◆ Student who participated in the school exchange

I thought it was wonderful to interact with people through the Kakehashi Project to understand someone else's culture and to get them to understand ours. At first, I was a little nervous about school visits and homestays, but now I know that they can lead to very enjoyable and lasting memories. What I learned there was the difference between the United States and Japan and the warmth of people. If we acknowledge the differences and accept the good points of others into ourselves, we will be able to establish good relationships with them. I hope that I will not only enrich my school and daily life, but that I will also be able to continue to interact with Curtis High School students which will hopefully lead to interactions between the United States and Japan. While being grateful for such an opportunity, I will continue doing what I can do, namely interacting with them by communicating on social media and transmitting Japanese culture.

## 5. Dissemination by the participants

 <p>The screenshot shows a Facebook post from a user named 'jacoji'. The post includes a photo of a long, straight path leading towards a traditional Japanese building with a tiled roof, surrounded by trees. The text of the post describes the user's visit to the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum as one of the highlights of their trip to Japan, mentioning the weather, culture, and people. It also reflects on the historical significance of the museum and the importance of peace.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows an Instagram post from a user named 'emmoo.emma'. The post features a photo of a person wearing a vibrant, patterned traditional Okinawan kimono (kimonodori). The text of the post describes the user's experience of wearing the kimono during a homestay in Okinawa, expressing appreciation for the traditional clothing and the opportunity to participate in the local culture. The post has received several likes and comments.</p>
<p>About KAKEHASHI Project (Facebook)</p> <p>My visit to Okinawa had to be one of the highlights of my trip to Japan. The weather, the culture, the people were all so beautiful and welcoming, I felt extremely lucky to be there. In all honesty though, our trip to the Peace museum in Okinawa was one of the</p>	<p>About The homestay (Instagram)</p> <p>With my homestay family I also went to Kokusai Dori and wore a traditional Okinawan kimono!! The traditional clothes are very beautiful (though they took a very long time to put on) and I was glad to be able to participate in this part of Okinawan</p>

<p>most humbling and informative aspects of this entire experience. The concept of peace now has a new meaning to me after learning of the struggle of Okinawan citizens through the battle of Okinawa. One of the most important things I have learned is that although Okinawa looks like a wonderful resort destination, the scars of war truly run deep in the society 75 years later and we should always strive for peace in the future.</p>	<p>culture. It is very different from old American clothes.</p>
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## 6. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

<div> <div> <b>Action Plan -Speech and Skit Contest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why:</b> To show our experiences during the Kakehashi homestay program</li> <li>• <b>When:</b> In March, at the JIS festival and during rehearsals</li> <li>• <b>Who:</b> Skit members, teacher, speakers, Kyushu College students</li> </ul> </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To Whom:</b> Friends, family, and those participating at the festival.</li> <li>• <b>What (are we doing):</b> Participate at the JIS Festival</li> <li>• <b>How (how are we doing it):</b> Perform a skit representing the Japanese and Okinawan culture</li> </ul> </div> </div>	
<p>Action Plan (Group 1)</p> <p>Skit members, teacher, speakers, Kyushu College students will perform a skit representing the Japanese and Okinawan culture to friends, family, and those participating at the JIS festival and during rehearsals in March in order to show our experiences during the Kakehashi homestay program.</p>	<p>Action Plan (Group 2)</p> <p>We plan to play taiko drums or perform an Eisa with a professional group local to our area during the Curtis culture assembly in March, to spread Japanese Culture across Curtis High School. We will perform Taiko/Eisa, either with a professional group or just students. We will reach out to our local groups, and see if they're interested in performing with us in the assembly, and do rehearsals to make sure it works well.</p>