



KAKEHASHI Project (United States of America)

Inbound program for Japanese Americans the 2nd Slot

Program Report

1. Program Overview

Under the “KAKEHASHI Project” of Japan’s Friendship Ties Programs, 66 Japanese Americans and supervisors from the U.S. visited Japan from February 26 to March 4, 2020 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: 66 participants

[Prefectures Visited]

Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa, Iwate

2. Program Schedule

2/26(Wed)	【Arrival】	
2/27(Thu)	【Orientation】 【School Exchange】 Kanda University of International Studies	
2/28(Fri)	(1) Group A : Iwate	(2) Group B,C : Iwate
	【Observation】 Hama Rikyu Gardens 【Observation】 Japanese Overseas Migration Museum Move to Iwate from Tokyo	【Observation】 Japanese Overseas Migration Museum Move to Iwate from Tokyo
	【Courtesy Call / Lecture on the Region 】 Ms. HISAMATSU Kimiko, Manager, Industry Promotion Department, Tourism & International Relations Section, Kuji City	
2/29(Sat)	【Cultural Experience】 Judo, Calligraphy (Mifune Judan Memorial Hall)	【Cultural Experience】 Zazen Meditation (Chofukuji-Temple) 【Observation, Experience】 Kuji

	【Observation, Experience】 Kuji Amber Museum	Amber Museum 【Meeting with Host Family】
3/1(Sun)	【Observation / Experience】 Yachi Forestry Company 【Cultural Experience】 Zazen Meditation (Chosenji-Temple)	【Homestay】
3/2(Mon)	【Cultural Experience】 g (rice cake making) 【Workshop】 【Farewell Party with Host Family】	
3/3(Tue)	Move to Tokyo from Iwate 【Observation】 Imperial Palace 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. OMI Asako, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs 【Reporting Session】	
3/4(Wed)	【Observation】 Odaiba 【Departure】	

3. Program Photos

All (Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa)



2/27 【School Exchange】 Kanda
University of International Studies



2/28 【Observation】 Japan Overseas
Migration Museum



3/3 【Courtesy Call】 Ms. OMI Asako
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign
Affairs



3/3 【Reporting Session】

Group a (Iwate)



2/29 【Cultural Experience】 Judo & Calligraphy (Mifune Judan Memorial Hall)



3/1 【Observation / Experience】 Yachi Forestry Company

Group B, C (Iwate)



2/29 【Cultural Experience】 Zazen Meditation (Chofukuji-Temple)



3/1 【Homestay】

All (Iwate)



2/28 【Courtesy Call / Lecture on the Region】 Ms. HISAMATSU Kimiko, Manager, Industry Promotion Department, Tourism & International Relations Section Kuji City



2/29 【Observation / Experience】 Kuji Amber Museum



3/2 【Cultural Experience】 Mochi-Tsuki (rice cake making)



3/2 【Workshop】

4. Voice from Participants (abstract)

Group A

◆ The videos and lecture about Kuji city definitely inspired me to visit the various local attractions of Kuji. I did not know how deeply the city was affected by the natural disasters, but it is impressive how well the city is doing now and how everyone came together. I appreciated how willing the students were to talk with us about our experiences. I wish we were able to continue talking with them about their university experiences. I enjoyed talking with the company employees. I enjoyed the amber museum, judo/calligraphy sessions, the temple, and other experiences we were able to have in Kuji. Special shout out to everyone that brought us around and became our friends.

◆ It was very striking to see the speed with which the people of Kuji city repaired their city after the natural disasters. Also it struck with me how susceptible Japan is to natural disasters in general, but I guess that might be one reason they are so efficient in rebuilding after they happen. It also struck me how dedicated they are to their specific crafts. The school exchange was very interesting because of the effort they put into customizing the school to the countries the languages belonged to. Also it was very clean and the part where we shared our Japanese American familial history was enriching as well. My favorite part of visiting the coal company was doing the work of the local people. They were very hospitable and interacting with them at work really made me feel like I got to know Kuji city better and was one of the closest interactions with the Japanese citizens. No homestay but staying at the hotel in Iwate was still great. Being able to use the onsen and eating the meals they prepared for us was excellent. I enjoyed exploring Japan on free time and getting to step into local shops and restaurants outside of the planned activities as a more organic experience.

Group B

◆ The lecture and the accompaniment of the video featuring Kuji City's culture, sights to see, and society made me extremely excited to explore with my host family. Learning about the tsunami and earthquake and the difficult recovery was interesting as well. The school was beautiful and I was surprised when I saw how culturally diverse the multicultural center

was there and how there is such a strong emphasis on learning English. Homestay was my favorite part of the trip because the people of Kuji showed me why they love the city they live in and they introduced me to so many new foods that I can only dream of cooking back home. They are also motivated me to learn more Japanese so that when I visit Japan again I will be able to hold a conversation and learn even more.

◆ Kanda University of International Studies was really enjoyable and I loved learning about the Japanese school system. I was very impressed by the architecture and the facilities that the school had and I enjoyed speaking with the university students. Homestay was the most amazing experience. The family we stayed with was so generous with teaching us about Japan. We learned a lot about Japanese cuisine and cooking with them was really fun. We learned to make udon from scratch with a traditional method and I posted about this. Many of my friends in America contacted me saying that they would love to come to Japan. I learned a lot about Japanese values too, and enjoyed living in such a peaceful and beautiful environment.

Group C

◆ The lecture was very informative I was able to learn a lot about the past history and the future of what Kuji city wants to do. I think that the lecture taught me a lot about the food and the cultures and also about the people of Kuji as well. I really liked the schools exchange and getting to see the remarkable architecture at the Kanda Institute of international studies. It was really interesting because I am in engineering and really like design and the buildings were really cool to see. The company and government office where we went to see about immigration at the JICA museum was really fun. Also I thought that the museum was interesting because I got a better insight into my great grandparents' lifestyle in the sugar cane plantation industry. The Homestay was amazing and my favorite part of the trip. My host family were so kind and hospitable to all of us and treated us with so much respect. I loved the homestay because of the things we got to see and the hospitality that they showed to us.

◆ The lectures were pretty interesting but a bit short. However, they did provide a lot of good information in a short window. The school exchange was amazing, the students were very impressive with their English speaking skills. Getting to talk to them and share our family history with them was a very impactful experience. Meeting the mayor of Kuji city was great and a humbling experience. My favorite part was the homestay. I will never forget my family that I got the blessing of staying with on this trip. They were such great people and they treated us very well. Though we didn't speak much of each other's languages, it still feels like they are true family. I will never forget them. Another great experience that I had was visiting the Buddhist temple. The monks there were very friendly and I am humbled to have taken part in the ceremony they practiced. Knowing that my family comes from Japan and that my great aunt did the same thing further impacts me and makes me appreciate the experience that much more.

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



◆ Host family

The students were polite and even put away their futons. They were also pretty good at using chopsticks, not picky about food, and some even enjoyed natto and kimchi.

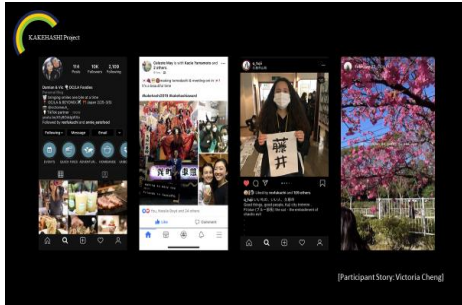


◆ Student who participated in the school exchange

In the exchange, I tried to communicate a lot using my existing knowledge. At first I was a little nervous, but talking about my overseas experience helped the conversation move along, and really helped us to make an enjoyable and meaningful time. I would actually like to learn more about the history of Japanese Americans.

6. Dissemination by the participants

 <p>q_fujii 久慈市山形</p> <p>藤井</p> <p>Liked by tuhurray and others</p> <p>q_fujii いいもの、いい人、久慈市 Good things, good people, Kuji city tmntm It blue (ブルー部員) the cat - the embodiment... more</p>	 <p>Thomas Pasta Cotugno 1 min · 🌐</p> <p>To those who may not have known, I was in Japan for the past weekish with JACL's #Kakehashi19 program that sent me and about 60 other Japanese-Americans to Japan. From speaking at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to making some neat friends, I had an amazing time. Meeting my host family in Kuji City, Iwate felt like getting to meet the Japanese grandparents I never had the opportunity to ever see. Their hospitality was the best I could have ever had asked for. I improved on my Japanese significantly with them despite accidentally stating I had a 29 year old daughter once whoops. Thank you to those I met, and I hope others may have this opportunity as I did.</p> <p>Photos: A group of people eating at a table, a person standing in front of a statue, and a group of people standing together.</p>
<p>About KAKEHASHI Project (Instagram)</p> <p>Thanks to the kakehashi2019 I've been in Iwate prefecture for the past few days. So far we have already experienced Judo, calligraphy, and amber museum, and a charcoal manufacturing company. Thank you to all the friends I have made and people we have met. Looking forward to the rest of the trip.</p>	<p>About KAKEHASHI Project (Facebook)</p> <p>To those who may not have known, I was in Japan for the past weeks with #Kakehashi19 program that sent me and about 60 other Japanese Americans to Japan. From speaking at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to making some neat friends, I had an amazing time. Meeting my host family in Kuji City, Iwate felt like getting to meet the Japanese grandparents I never had the opportunity to ever see. Their hospitality was the best I could have ever had asked for. I improved on my Japanese significantly with them. Thank you to those I met, and I hope others may have this opportunity as I did.</p>

7. Action Plan Presented by Participants at the Reporting Session

 <p>[Participant Story: Victoria Cheng]</p>	<div><div><div><div>MONTH 1</div><div>Social media posts</div><div>Presentations</div><div>Gifts/Omiyage - with explanations</div></div><div><div>MONTH 2.5</div><div>Gather group metrics via surveymonkey</div></div></div><div><div>Month 1</div><div>Month 2</div><div>Month 2.5</div><div>Month 3</div></div><div><div>MONTH 2</div><div>Social media posts Round 2</div><div>Create survey via surveymonkey</div></div><div><div>MONTH 3</div><div>Compile group data</div><div>Send final data/write-up to JICE/JACL</div></div></div> <div>Implementation Timeline</div>
<p>Action Plan (Group A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Kakehashi Project is a once-in-lifetime opportunity for young Japanese Americans to experience the place of their family’s origin.• Many of the participants have never been to Japan, but some have and find value in the Kakehashi Project.• Kakehashi project builds community and inspires pride.• Whether we are full Japanese or a quarter, or if we speak Japanese or not, we have a Japanese community worldwide through this bridge we’ve created and are still creating. <p>After leaving Japan, we don’t want to forget these important lessons, so here are our ideas for keeping the bridge strong.</p>	<p>Action Plan (Group B)</p> <p><u>Month 1</u></p> <p>Social media posts</p> <p>Presentations</p> <p>Gifts/Omiyage-with explanations</p> <p><u>Month 2</u></p> <p>Social media posts Round 2</p> <p>Create survey via SurveyMonkey</p> <p><u>Month 2.5</u></p> <p>Gather group metrics via SurveyMonkey</p> <p><u>Month 3</u></p> <p>Compile group data</p> <p>Send final data/write-up to the relevant organization.</p> <p>Sharing our experience on social media</p> <p><u>Future</u></p> <p>Post videos on YouTube</p> <p>Be interviewed for newspapers</p> <p>Write articles and blogs</p> <p>Spread information on campus</p> <p>Give gifts to friends and family</p>
<div><div></div><div>Action Plan</div><div></div></div> <div><div>INTENTION (目的)</div><div><div><div>CULTURE</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Host foreigners❖ Family time❖ Respect</div></div><div><div>ADVERSITY</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Resilience❖ Community coming together❖ Positive mindset</div></div><div><div>JACL</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Willingness to learn about other cultures❖ Trying new things❖ Sharing our experiences❖ Encouraging others to participate in Kakehashi</div></div></div></div>	
<p>Action Plan (Group C)</p> <p>What we took away from every part of this trip is that everything the Japanese people do is done with purpose and no matter what they do they have a goal for their endeavors. To our local communities and at our colleges and universities, we will practice “mokuteki” as soon as we get back home by every member of group C through social media such as Instagram.</p> <p>About Japanese culture (food, family, respect), resilience, community coming together, positive mindset, etc.</p> <p>Through sharing our experiences, we advocate willingness to learn about other cultures and trying to new things and encourage others to participate in Kakehashi.</p>	