



KAKEHASHI Project (United States)

Visiting the U.S. Program for America Bowl Program Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】

A group of 10 outstanding high school students who achieved excellent results in the America Bowl Competition ^(Note) held in Japan were dispatched to Washington, D.C., with the aim of promoting mutual understanding between Japan and the United States. During their stay in the U.S., the students visited the local embassy and various government-related institutions, and deepened their knowledge of Japan-U.S. relations, as well as the cultures and diplomatic ties of both countries through exchanges with American students. While gaining new insights and learning through exposure to different cultures and customs, they also actively shared the attractions of Japan with the people they met during their visit.

(Note) America Bowl: A competition held in English organized by the America-Japan Society with the aim of deepening Japanese high school students' interest in the U.S. and their understanding of U.S.-Japan relations.

【Participants】

Total: 10 Japanese high school students and representatives from The America-Japan Society, Inc.

(Breakdown) 3 students from Kaisei Senior High School
 3 students from Tama Senior High School
 3 students from Yokohama-Suiran Senior High School
 1 representative from The America-Japan Society, Inc.

【Locations】 Washington, D.C. / Lorton, Virginia, U.S.

【Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Mar. 9 (Mon) **【Pre-departure Orientation】** Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warnings, precautions of infectious disease, etc.

■ Dispatch Program:

Mar. 18 (Wed) Departure from Haneda Airport, Arrival at Washington Dulles International Airport

【Post-arrival Orientation】

Mar. 19 (Thu) **【School Exchange】** South County High School

【Observation】 Lincoln Memorial

Mar. 20 (Fri) **【Observation】** Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II
Guide: Mr. John Tobe, Chair, National Japanese American Memorial Foundation

【Observation】 Library of Congress
 【Observation】 Japan-America Society of Washington DC
 【Observation】 The National Museum of American History
 【Meeting with the Host Families】
 Mar. 21 (Sat) 【Homestay】 Lorton, Virginia
 Mar. 22 (Sun) 【Farewell Party with the Host Families】
 Mar. 23 (Mon) 【Courtesy Call】 Embassy of Japan in the United States of America
 Mr. YAMADA Shigeo, Ambassador
 Mr. ODAIRA Masatsugu, Minister, Public Affairs Section / Director of the Japan
 Information & Culture Center
 【Observation】 U.S. Capitol
 【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program
 findings, confirming social media posts, preparation of action plans)
 Mar. 24 (Tue) Departure from Washington Dulles International Airport
 Mar. 25 (Wed) Arrival at Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Dispatch Program

	
March 19, 2026 【School Exchange】 South County High School	March 19, 2026 【Observation】 Lincoln Memoria
	
March 20, 2026 【Observation】 Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II	March 20, 2026 【Observation】 Library of Congress

	
March 20, 2026 【Observation】 Japan-America Society of Washington DC	March 20, 2026 【Observation】 The National Museum of American History
	
March 20, 2026 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. YAMADA Shigeo, Ambassador, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America	March 23, 2026 【Observation】 U.S. Capitol

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ High School Student

Our visit to the Japanese Embassy in the United States was very interesting. There, I met with the Ambassador and heard some valuable perspectives. Since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is an organization striving to achieve the America Bowl's goal of strengthening friendly relations between the United States and Japan on a larger scale, the visit was very insightful. In particular, the Ambassador spoke about the significant role that tourist exchanges play as part of this endeavor. Deepening mutual understanding of each other's cultures through tourism is crucial for building a peaceful society, and the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington D.C. is said to be a prime example of this.

◆ High School Student

The school exchange program at South County High School was by far the best experience. During our interactions at the local high school, the students' reactions to our presentation on Japan gave us insight into their level of understanding of the country. Additionally, chatting with them provided a valuable opportunity to improve my language skills by engaging with authentic English spoken by students my own age. I also realized that the size, structure, and educational systems of the high school differed fundamentally from those in Japan, which gave me an opportunity to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of both systems and how they influence national character.

◆ **High School Student**

The homestay was an incredibly enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Of course, the opportunity to learn from people I would never normally meet and visit places I wouldn't normally have access to was invaluable, but I'm glad that the homestay at the end allowed me to put those experiences to use and gain firsthand knowledge.

4. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.





We visited the Library of Congress. The library houses many historically valuable items, including Stradivarius instruments, which helped us appreciate the importance of preserving cultural heritage. It also holds examples of traditional Japanese Yamato-e paintings, allowing us to gain a deeper understanding of the cultural ties between Japan and the United States.

March 20, 2026 (Instagram)

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At the National Museum of American History in D.C., the artifacts lined up behind the glass weren't just exhibits; they felt like history itself breathing; The pulse of industry, the memories of food, the warmth of daily life—everything spoke to me in a quiet, steady voice. Standing before Abraham Lincoln's hat, I realized that history isn't a distant past, but a story that continues to this day. My experience at the WWII exhibit resonated deeply. It forced me to confront a gap in perspectives between Japan and the U.S.—a difference in values I had sensed before but only now felt with certainty. What struck me most was a curator's remark: they approach these exhibits with the mindset of competing with Disneyland. It revealed a fierce sense of responsibility to make history truly "reach" people and stay alive in their hearts.

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April 9, 2026 (Yokohama-Suiran Senior High School's Website)

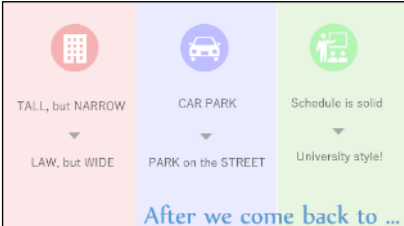
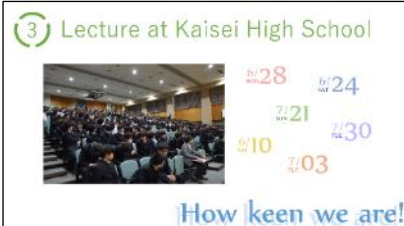


April 26, 2026 (Tama Senior High School Alumni Association's Instagram)

“Victory at the 5th America Bowl” A joint team from the International Exchange Committee and the Quiz Research Club participated in the 5th America Bowl, held on Saturday, October 18, at the Akasaka Community Center, and achieved first place overall. The America Bowl is a quiz competition conducted entirely in English, featuring questions on American culture, history, geography, and related topics. Our team advanced through the preliminary rounds among 32 participating schools and went on to compete in an intense final round on stage against the top six schools. As a result of placing among the top three teams, the participating students were awarded the opportunity to take part in a short-term study visit to Washington, D.C., scheduled for March next year. This program is organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.	“A Triumph—and On to Washington, D.C.! Tama High School Students Win the America Bowl” Proud news has arrived from our current 69th cohort (third-year students). At the 5th America Bowl, a national English-language quiz competition for high school students organized by the Japan–America Society and held on October 18, 2025, three students from our school achieved an outstanding first-place victory. ●A Short-Term Visit to Washington, D.C. As a prize for their victory, the students traveled to Washington, D.C. in late March for a short-term visit. During their stay, they visited the Embassy of Japan in the United States and the headquarters of the Japan–America Society, toured a local high school, and experienced a homestay. Through these invaluable experiences, the students took an important step toward becoming bridges between Japan and the United States.
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5. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plan at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Presentations by a total of 3 groups

Kaisei Senior High School		
		
【Results of the Program】 • In Japan, buildings are tall but narrow. In the U.S., buildings are low but wide. • In Japan, there are parking lots. In the U.S., people park on the street. • In Japan, school schedules are strict. In the U.S., they are more flexible, like a Japanese university system. 【Action Plan】 Within three months, our entire group members will reach out to students at our school to share the insights and experiences gained during the program and invite the people we met during our visit in the U.S. to give online presentations, with the aim of increasing opportunities for the next generation of students at our school to provide them with more opportunities to experience the overseas.		

Tama Senior High School

気づき

・首都でも土地の安い方が意外
・官公庁も敷地が広く、公園のようになっている

日本の東京は所狭しと高層ビルが立ち並んでいて、西が囲もこのような土地の使い方はしていない



気づき

・治安がいい地域ですら銃撃・殺人などが日本よりも頻りに起こる

・ホストファミリーの空き家の隣家にSWATと軍が発進した事例も

・NRAの存在が銃社会を確固たるものになっているのでは



Action Plan 1

- ・When: 1か月以内
- ・Where: インターネット上
- ・To whom: 外交に興味を持っている可能性がある高校生
- ・What: 経歴・気づきの発信
- ・Why: さらなる留学プログラム等の交流の増加
- ・How: 英語ディベート部のInstagramでの発信、JAYS2026参加メンバーへの発信

【Results of the Program】

Food Culture

- ・ Portions are large
- ・ Few vegetables (almost none)
- ・ High in calories

Personality

- ・ Friendly
- ・ People will casually greet you even if they don't know you
- ・ Conversations happen at supermarket checkout counters

Land Use

- ・ Even in the capital, land is used lavishly
- ・ Government offices have spacious grounds that resemble parks

Slang and cultural influence

- ・ Significantly richer than in Japan
- ・ Gen-Z has strong cultural influence
- ・ Gen-Z has a distinct, unique culture
- ・ Trends change rapidly
- ・ Digital drugs are popular mainly on Instagram and TikTok

Gun culture (NRA, SWAT)

- ・ Even in areas with good public safety, shootings and murders occur more frequently than in Japan

People of many different races mix together as a matter of course

- ・ There are significant regional differences; the area we visited was a model of a diverse society

【Action Plan】

- ・ Within one month, our entire group will target high school students who may be interested in diplomacy, with the aim of increasing exchanges such as study abroad programs online. We will share our experiences and insights via the English Debate Club's Instagram account and with members participating in Japan-ASEAN Youth Summit 2026.
- ・ Our entire group members will, within three months or thereafter, primarily at schools, share our experiences and insights with high school students and teachers—with the aim of increasing exchange opportunities such as study abroad programs—at student assemblies, student council exchange events, and cultural festivals.
- ・ Our entire group members will, within one month, target school community members (students,

faculty, alumni, etc.) through the internet and promotional publications, aiming to spark their interest through the personal experiences of people they know and encourage them to share these stories. To this end, we will collaborate with the alumni association to solicit contributions detailing these experiences and lessons learned for the school website and alumni magazine.

Yokohama-Suiran Senior High School



アクションプラン

- ・グループ全員で、日本の魅力とアメリカの魅力日本語と英語の両方を使って発信する。
- ・媒体はInstagramおよびMediumを使用する。
- ・両サイトの利用者は若年層が中心であるため、発信の対象を若年層におき、若年層における両国の理解促進を目指す。

【Results of the Program】

- ・ Compared to Japan, educational facilities such as museums were more widely accessible, and many of the exhibits were visually engaging and easy to understand, making them enjoyable even for young children.
- ・ School facilities, such as libraries, gyms, and theaters, were more well-equipped than those in Japanese schools.
- ・ In high school, students had greater autonomy in choosing their courses compared to Japan.
- ・ Sports courts were installed in parks, allowing anyone to play a variety of sports.
- ・ Many people cherished their roots and their own national cultures.
- ・ People from diverse backgrounds lived there, and while they shared a common American identity, they also respected their own cultures.
- ・ There were truly many generous people, starting with my host family.
- ・ High school students were active outside of school and work, engaging in a wide range of activities regardless of genre.
- ・ They communicated with strangers.
- ・ There are many dishes that even Japanese people can enjoy, but the portions are too large.
- ・ Many of the foods commonly eaten in the U.S. have been influenced by other countries.
- ・ Most places are just as hygienic as in Japan.

【Action Plan】

Our entire group will use social media (Instagram and Medium) over the next three months to widely promote the appeal of both Japan and the United States, focusing primarily on young people in both countries and communicating the attractions of each nation in both Japanese and English.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)