



KAKEHASHI Project Alumni Meeting (L.A.) Follow-up Project Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 This program was held for past participants (alumni) of the KAKEHASHI Project in the U.S. By providing an opportunity for them to make direct visits to Japan-related organizations to learn about Japanese cultural activities in the U.S., it aimed to promote their continued interest in Japan. It also aimed to strengthen the alumni network through a face-to-face alumni meeting.

【Participants】

- Total: 21 alumni in the U.S. (participants of the KAKEHASHI Project between FY2015 and FY2022)

Breakdown: 1 undergraduate student, 1 graduate student, 19 working youths

- 6 guests

Mr. Mike Penny (The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles)

Ms. Alissa Bernstein (American Jewish Committee/AJC)

Ms. Gabriel Rebeck (Laurasian Institution)

Ms. Yume Hidaka (Laurasian Institution)

Mr. Ryan Yoshikawa (Japanese American Citizens League/JACL)

Mr. Seia Watanabe (Japanese American Citizens League/JACL)

【Location】 Los Angeles, California

【Program Schedule】

- Face-to-face Alumni Meeting Program:

September 30, 2023 (Sat)

1. 【Exchange, Observation】 The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles (JFLA) and Katayama Kobo Exhibition (exhibition of works by people with disabilities)

【Activity Introduction】 “What is The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles?”

Mr. Mike Penny, Program Officer, Japanese Language Study Program Coordinator, The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

2. Social Gathering

【Opening Session】 Opening remarks and introduction of guests

Ms. ISHII Aya, Consul, Consulate of Japan in Los Angeles

【Presentations】 Presentations by four alumni

“Memories of KAKEHASHI and its connection with our present”

Speakers: 1) Ms. Kaitlyn Chu & Ms. Sara Kubo (Japanese Americans 1st Slot, FY2018)
 2) Mr. Richik Halder (Japan Bowl, FY2022)
 3) Ms. Tori Ishikawa (Japanese Americans 2nd Slot, FY2017)

【Commemorative Photo】

【Exchange】

2. Program Photos

	
【Activity Introduction】 “What is The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles?”	【Observation】 Katayama Kobo Exhibition
	
A KAKEHASHI alumni meeting member moderating the event	【Opening Session】 Opening remarks and introduction of guests by Ms. ISHII Aya, Consul, Consulate of Japan in Los Angeles
	
【Presentation】 Presentation by an alumni	【Presentations】 Participants listening to the presentations
	
【Commemorative Photo】	【Exchange】 Exchanges among alumni

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Undergraduate

It was interesting to meet alumni who participated in different KAKEHASHI Programs and listen to stories about programs that were held under themes that differed from mine. The presentations by the alumni were also excellent.

◆ Working Youth

I was able to get together with friends who participated in the same KAKEHASHI Program as me. The event was run very effectively and was highly meaningful. The food was also delicious.

◆ Working Youth

The event was very well structured, and the quality of the catering service was extremely high. I enjoyed meeting with people who participated in a different KAKEHASHI Program and listening to their experiences in detail.

◆ Working Youth

I am glad I had the opportunity to connect with people who participated in other programs and to learn more about The Japan Foundation in this alumni meeting. The art gallery exhibition exposed us to Japanese arts and culture and also showcased recent works related to U.S.-Japan relations.

◆ Working Youth

It was a long-awaited learning experience to engage in exchanges with people who have participated in the KAKEHASHI Program. I thought the event was well structured and allotted ample time for presentations and conversations.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Cooperating Organization

Co-hosting the KAKEHASHI Alumni Meeting was highly meaningful, and we would be honored if we have been of some help. We are also pleased to have had the opportunity to understand and learn about the KAKEHASHI Project and alumni meeting.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

	October 1, 2023 (Instagram) I flew out to LA this weekend to attend the KAKEHASHI alumni event. Very grateful for the opportunity! I met a lot of cool new people there and hope to stay involved in the KAKEHASHI Project moving forward.
	October 16, 2023 (Instagram) A few weeks ago, I had the meeting opportunity to attend the KAKEHASHI Alumni Reunion, hosted by the Japan foundation in Los Angeles. It was incredible to reconnect with fellow alumni, many of whom I hadn't seen in person since 2019, and to network with other leaders in the community-building space such as Brian Hertz and Alissa Bernstein from the American Jewish Community (AJC).

Cooperating Organization: The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles (JFLA)

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)