



KAKEHASHI Project Visiting U.S. Program for America Bowl Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 This program was conducted with the main objective of deepening friendly relations between Japan and the United States by having high school students from Japan who excelled at the America Bowl Competition* visit Washington, D.C., to deepen their understanding of the history, culture, diplomacy, etc. of the two countries and actively share the attractions of Japan through exchanges with local high school students and visits to various observation sites.

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

(Breakdown) 3 students from Eiko Gakuen Senior High School
 3 students from Kaisei Senior High School
 3 students from Chiba Prefectural Chiba Senior High School
 2 representatives from The America-Japan Society, Inc.

【Location】 Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

【Program Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Mar. 14 (Thu) 【Pre-departure Orientation】 Program objective & mission, rundown of the schedule, travel precautions, COVID-19 countermeasures, etc.

■ Visiting U.S. Program:

Mar. 23 (Sat) 【Pre-departure Orientation】
Departure from Haneda Airport, Arrival at Washington Dulles International Airport

Mar. 24 (Sun) 【Observation】 The National Japanese American Memorial
Guide: Mr. John Tobe, Chair, National Japanese American Memorial Foundation

 【Observation】 Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

 【Observation】 National Mall

Mar. 25 (Mon) 【Experience, Observation】 Volunteering at DC Central Kitchen (volunteer organization) preparing meals

【Courtesy Call】 United States of America Embassy of Japan
Mr. MIYAKE Fumito, Minister, Public Affairs Section / Director of the Japan Information and Culture Center

【Observation】 Japan America Society of WDC

Mar. 26 (Tue)

【School Exchange】 DC International School

【Observation】 Science and Technology Policy Institute

Mar. 27 (Wed)

【Observation】 Georgetown University

【Observation】 National Museum of Natural History, National Gallery of Art

【Exchange】 Globalize DC Japanese Plus

Mar. 28 (Thu)

【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)

【Reporting Session】 Presentation of program findings and action plans

【Observation】 National Museum of American History

Mar. 29 (Fri)

Departure from Washington Dulles International Airport

Mar. 30 (Sat)

Arrival at Haneda International Airport

2. Program Photos



March 24 【Observation】 The National Japanese American Memorial



March 24 【Observation】 Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum



March 24 【Observation】 National Mall



March 25 【Experience, Observation】
Volunteering at DC Central Kitchen (volunteer organization) preparing meals



March 25 【Courtesy Call】 United States of America Embassy of Japan
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March 25 【Observation】
Japan America Society of WDC



March 26 【School Exchange】
DC International School



March 26 【Observation】
Science and Technology Policy Institute



March 27 【Observation】
Georgetown University



March 27 【Exchange】
Globalize DC Japanese Plus



March 28 【Workshop】



March 28 【Reporting Session】

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ High School Student

By visiting various institutions and schools and hearing from people with diverse backgrounds, I was able to get a vague idea of the outline of the US as a country. This has helped me to understand the characteristics of my home country, Japan, from a relative standpoint.

◆ High School Student

The exchange with DCI left the strongest impression on me. The interactions with government agencies and research institutions were often formal, so it was with the local high school students that I felt I truly got to know the people in the U.S. That being said, it was the visits to the institutions that were true learning experiences. I was able to listen to stories that I would never have heard on a normal trip. In particular, when we visited the Japanese Embassy, I remember what Minister Miyake said about the kind of "approach" we should take when dealing with others.

◆ High School Student

I was particularly surprised that what the guide, John Tobe, told us while going around The National Japanese American Memorial is not at all mentioned in Japanese textbooks. It was very interesting to hear him talk about how the crane sculpture, which depicts a crane that can just barely peek outside the walls but is unable to fly away, represents the interned Japanese people, and how some Japanese people who cooperated with the U.S. afterward lived their lives.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Observation Destination

It was so wonderful to see America Bowl students' enthusiasm and motivation to study English. We hope they help inspire US students to study Japanese! Thank you for taking the time to visit with us, learn more about JASWDC and NAJAS and send a motivational video message to our 2024 Japan Bowl students! We hope they had a wonderful trip and experience in Washington DC.

◆ Observation Destination

As a prior participant of the KAKEHASHI Program, it was very fun to share my experiences of Japan with a Japanese audience and help them have a wonderful KAKEHASHI experience in America by giving them a tour of my university. What left an impression on me was the conversations I had with the students and how passionately they compared American and Japanese cultural differences and similarities and why the study of international relations was so important.

◆ Student from the Exchange School

I had so much fun!! I was a little surprised the group was all boys, but their English was so good and we had a blast. One of the students could even speak some French! Learning a new language is hard, and this experience has motivated me to focus a little harder in class so that I can one day go to a different country, like this group did, and be able to speak the local language.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

 We visited National Japanese American Memorial and learned about the history of Japanese Americans and specifically the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. 全米日系米国人記念碑を訪れ、米国での日系人の歴史、特に第二次大戦期の強制収容について学びました。 4 days ago	03/23/2024 - 03/30/2024 KAKEHASHI Project America Bowl @Washington DC I participated in KAKEHASHI Project for a week to accomplish the mission: Behave as an ambassador to promote Japan and Japanese cultur... もっと見る 
March 23, 2024 (Instagram) We visited the National Japanese American Memorial and learned about the history of Japanese Americans and specifically the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.	March 2, 2024 (Facebook) 03/23/2024 - 03/30/2024 KAKEHASHI Project America Bowl @Washington DC I participated in KAKEHASHI Project for a week to accomplish the mission: Behave as an ambassador to promote Japan and Japanese culture in the U.S. To achieve the mission, we delivered a presentation on Japanese castles and interacted with diverse people in various organizations. Luckily, I was able to experience dense, enjoyable, and inspiring activities with diligent friends. Last, but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in the program. I would not be able to experience these precious activities without any of you. Thank you so much!! ...

6. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Presentations by a total of 3 groups

Eiko Gakuen Senior High School		
		
【What we Learned】 • The portions in the U.S. are large, and many high calory ingredients such as cheese are included in many dishes. For this reason, they taste good and are very photogenic. • Many people were kind and had a welcoming attitude no matter where we went. However, they spoke very fast and this felt difficult for us from Japan. • All of the buildings were big, the streets were wide, and there with many beautiful places all around. ● Conclusion Although there are differences between Japan and the U.S., there are also many similarities, such as the culture of enjoying cherry blossoms and the four seasons, and the custom of visiting places of historical value (ruins, museums, shrines and temples, etc.). We were able to learn a lot about the U.S. through this program, so we would like to share our culture with people in the U.S. so that they can learn more about Japan too. 【Action Plan】 First, our group participants will share their experiences on their respective social media accounts (already in progress and will continue to do so after our return to Japan), and then we will set an event to share and present our experiences at our school after April. In the future, we hope that the students involved in this school exchange and those who read our social media posts will continue to communicate with each other, and that this will be an opportunity to build more friendly relationships.		

Kaisei Senior High School

The Difference of Self-expression

Kaisei Academy Final Presentation

Artwork

- ◆ Classroom Display
- ◆ Hallway Artwork



CLOTHES

◆ USA



◆ JAPAN



【What we Learned】

There was a big difference in how people express themselves in the U.S. and Japan.

- In the U.S., there are many opportunities to express yourself through art.
- In Japan, people generally upload photos of food on Instagram, but people in the U.S. upload more selfies.
- Generally, students in Japan tend to focus on listening to what a teacher says during class, but students in the U.S. voiced their opinions and frequently asked questions.
- Conclusion (solely an observation, not saying one is better than the other):
 - People in the U.S. are good at expressing themselves, and people in Japan are good at adapting.
 - Schools in the U.S. have more classes that encourage self-expression than in Japan (classes on how to express yourself, on making YouTube videos, etc.)

【Action Plan】

● Individual action plan

To express ourselves, we will try to wear brightly colored clothes and actively voice our opinions. It is a small step, but we believe that if we change ourselves for the better, those around us will change as well. We plan to start this as soon as we return to Japan.

● Group action plan

Within 3 months of returning to Japan, we will first give a presentation about this program to the students of Kaisei Senior High School. Next, we will exchange ideas with the students about how to express ourselves and the importance of self-expression. Finally, we will share our experience with a wider audience through blogs and other outlets.

Chiba Prefectural Chiba Senior High School

Common Point

between JAPAN and the U.S.

Chiba High School

We have many essential things in common

Science

dance

Education

Science



【What we Learned】

● Museums

We felt that there were more exhibits in the U.S. than in Japan, and that the explanations were much more detailed. But we also noticed that people's interests and children's fascination to things like dinosaurs were the same in both countries.

● Education

The school we visited (DC International School) was different from Japanese high schools in many ways. In the U.S., individuality is more respected, and people can express themselves more in the way they dress and act. Japan is still quite conventional, but we feel that it is slowly becoming more like the U.S.

● Music and Dance

Although not many Japanese students dance or sing, through this exchange we realized that music and dance have the power to bring people together, regardless of the languages they speak.

【Action Plan】

Through this program, we have gained new knowledge and experience, but more than that, we learned about the many wonderful things about both the U.S. and Japan. Therefore, we will regularly post not only our experiences and learnings from this program, but also what is popular or talked about in the U.S. and Japan (when we make the posts) from our point of view on social media in both Japanese and English.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)