



KAKEHASHI Project (U.S.)
Visiting U.S. Program for High School Students
(National Museum of the Pacific War)

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 Japanese high school students visited the United States to deepen their understanding of politics, economy, society, culture, history, foreign policy toward peace, and Japan-U.S. relations through a visit to the local Consulate-General in Texas, a visit to the National Museum of the Pacific War, and exchanges with local students. This program was conducted with the aim of promoting understanding of Japan in the U.S., expanding understanding and support for Japan, and contributing to strengthening Japan's diplomatic foundation.

【Participants】 Total: 14 high school students and faculty from Japan

3 students from Otemon Gakuin Senior High School (Osaka)

3 students and 1 chaperone from Otemon Gakuin Otemae Senior High School (Osaka)

3 students from Fukuoka Pref. Dazaifu High School

4 students and 1 chaperone from Fukuoka Chikushi High School

【Locations】 Houston and Fredericksburg, Texas, USA

2. Program Schedule

Pre-study Program (Online):

Nov. 22 (Wed) Pre-departure orientation

Outbound Program:

Dec. 20 (Wed) Departure from Haneda Airport, Arrival to the U.S. at George Bush Intercontinental Airport

【Observation】Space Center Houston

【Orientation】

Dec. 21 (Thu) 【Courtesy Call】Mr. MURABAYASHI Hirofumi, Consul General, Consulate-General of Japan in Houston

【Lecture】“Overview of the state of Texas”

Lecturer: Mr. YAMAMURA Masato, Vice Consul, Consulate-General of Japan in Houston

【Lecture】“Introduction of JAXA Projects Human Spaceflight Technology

and Role of the Houston Office”

Lecturer: Ms. TAKAHASHI Akane, Deputy Director, JAXA Houston Office

【School Exchange】Post Oak School Students at Asia Society

Dec. 22 (Fri)

Travel from Houston to Fredericksburg

【Observation】National Museum of the Pacific War

【Regional Exchange】High school students around Fredericksburg, host families, local residents

【Homestay】6 households in Fredericksburg

Dec. 23 (Sat)

【Homestay】6 households in Fredericksburg

Dec. 24 (Sun)

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

【Reporting Session】Presentation of action plans

【Farewell Party with the Host Families】

Dec. 25 (Mon)

Travel from Fredericksburg to Houston

【Observation】River Oaks Area

Dec. 26 (Tue)

Departure from George Bush Intercontinental Airport

Dec. 27 (Wed)

Arrival at Haneda Airport

3. Program Photos

	
December 20 【 Observation 】 Space Center Houston	December 21 【 Courtesy Call 】 Mr. MURABAYASHI Hirofumi, Consul General, Consulate-General of Japan in Houston



December 21 【Lecture】 Group photo



December 21 【School Exchange】 Making rice balls with Post Oak School students



December 21 【 School Exchange 】 Commemorative photo



December 22【Observation】National Museum of the Pacific War



December 22 【Local Exchange】



December 23 【Homestay】 Making sweets



December 24 【Workshop】



December 24 【Reporting Session】

	
December 24 【Farewell Party】	December 25 【Observation】 Stroll around the River Oaks Area

4. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ High School Student

I was very surprised by how much emphasis is placed on "diversity" in the U.S., which made me realize how different their culture is from Japan's. I was also able to hear about Japanese and U.S. politics, NASA, and JAXA, which gave me a different perspective on U.S.-Japan politics and space exploration.

◆ High School Student

After the presentation on Japan, I was glad to have the opportunity to talk and interact with the local high school students, making rice balls together and doing a homestay, rather than just ending with a Q&A session.

◆ High School Student

I had spoken with people from the U.S. before, but I had never been the one to start the conversation. However, I did start conversations with them during this program. English was difficult, but it was fun. I had so many experiences that I can't write them all down.

◆ High School Student

I was able to discover many cultural differences between Japan and the U.S. during my homestay, and I enjoyed sharing what I noticed with my host family each time.

◆ Chaperone

I am glad that the Japanese students were able to have the valuable opportunity to directly interact with the local students (through presentations, workshops, homestays, etc.).

5. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Lecturer

Despite the time difference, the participants listened to us with great focus, and it was a humbling experience for us. We felt that space development is still not widely known to the public and were reminded of the importance of continuing our public relations activities.

◆ Faculty from the Exchange School

We saw a growing interest among the students who participated in the school exchange program

to learn more about Japan and Japanese culture. We would like to have more opportunities for this kind of cultural exchange in the future and have already begun to consider a cultural exchange program in Japan.

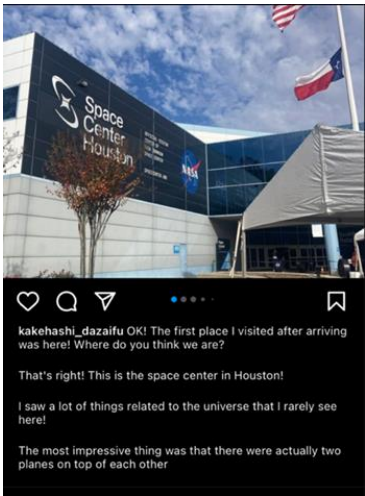
◆ Observation Destination

I really enjoyed hearing from the KAKEHASHI Program students and their host families about how their homestay experience went and what adventures they had. It was great to hear that everyone had a great time and had learned something from each other.

◆ Host Family

We learned a lot from the students and had a lot of fun. We were able to hear about Japanese traditions, culture, food, and other details through the eyes of a Japanese person, which made Japan even more interesting and fascinating. The homestay was a wonderful experience for our family and our teenage daughters made friends they will keep in touch with for years to come. Even though life in the U.S. and Japan may be very different, I realized that they are teenagers with big futures ahead of them, and they are all eager to make new friends and have new experiences to prepare for those futures.

6. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

 kakehashi_dazaifu OK! The first place I visited after arriving was here! Where do you think we are? That's right! This is the space center in Houston! I saw a lot of things related to the universe that I rarely see here! The most impressive thing was that there were actually two planes on top of each other.	
December 20, 2023 (Instagram) The first place I visited after arriving was here! Where do you think we are? That's right! This is the Space Center in Houston! I saw a lot of things related to the universe that I rarely see here! ... We saw so many things and I want to introduce them all, but I'll leave it at that for today! Where are we off to next?	December 21, 2023 (Instagram) School introduction and onigiri making. Thank you for your big reaction!



December 24, 2023 (Facebook)

Thank u for the really great two days! I'll never forget the wonderful time

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

Locations: Houston and Fredericksburg, Texas, USA (A total of 4 groups gave presentations.

Examples below)



【What we Learned】

- There are many kidnappings and dangerous areas in the U.S., and we felt that Japan is safer.
- There are many homeless people, and we felt that the gap between the rich and the poor is very large.
- Americans have strong family ties and cherish the time they spend together.

【Action Plan】

We plan to do the following during January after our return to Japan.

1. Present what we learned during our visit to the U.S. at a school assembly
2. Post articles about our experiences in the U.S. on the school's official website and on our personal Instagram accounts.

【What we Learned】

People in the U.S. ...

- are friendly, have their own opinions, and are positive and open-minded.
- value diversity more than people in Japan.
- have their own opinions and express them honestly.
- are good at communication, expressing their feelings and emotions.

【Action Plan】

While making daily posts on Instagram, we will summarize our findings and learnings about the differences in lifestyle, diet, and dress culture between the U.S. and Japan that we were unable to complete during the workshop. We will ask the mayor of Dazaifu City to provide us with

3. Create a video to compare and analyze the differences in culture, human nature, lifestyle, and school life between Japan and the U.S. We will also share our findings and learnings from our one-week stay in the U.S. to a wide audience.	a venue to share our learnings from the U.S. with local residents in January 2024, and we will present our findings. We also plan to make a presentation at a school assembly on March 24, 2024.
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Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)