



KAKEHASHI Project (U.S.)
Japan's Friendship Ties Program "KAKEHASHI Project"
Young Researchers the 1st Slot Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 This program invited to Japan young researchers from nine universities in the United States, primarily so they could deepen their understanding of Japanese culture, society, and history through a homestay experience, a school exchange, observations, and other such activities, strengthen their network by deepening exchanges with each other, and have them actively disseminate Japan's attractions from their standpoint as researchers.

【Participants】 Total: 39 young researchers from the U.S.
(Breakdown) 5 from the University of California, Berkeley
2 from Stanford University (California)
3 from American University
7 from Georgetown University (District of Colombia)
4 from Princeton University (New Jersey)
10 from The Fletcher School at Tufts University (Massachusetts)
1 from Washington University in Saint Louis (Missouri)
4 from the University of Maryland (Maryland)
3 from the University of Virginia (Virginia)

【Locations】 Group A: Tokyo, Kyoto, Shiga
Group B: Tokyo, Aichi

【Program Schedule】

■ Pre-study Program (Online)

Dec. 22 (Fri) **【Pre-departure Orientation】** Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warning, COVID-19 precautions, etc.

Set Period Prior to Arrival **【Video Viewing】** Lecture "Japan and the United Nations", "Lecture on Japan" (selected from Web Japan)

■ Inbound Program

Jan. 9 (Tue) Arrival at Haneda Airport
【Orientation】

Jan. 10 (Wed) **【Observation】** Tokyo National Museum
 【Observation】 National Diet Building
 【Briefing】 First North America Division, North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry
 of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

Jan. 11 (Thu) **【Lecture, Exchange of Opinions】** “What if you were Japan's Prime Minister?”
 Lecturer: Mr. TANIGUCHI Tomohiko, Specially Appointed Professor,
 University of Tsukuba

Jan. 12 (Fri) – 15 (Mon)

Divided into two groups. Group A: travel to Kyoto and Shiga; Group B: travel to Aichi.

Group A: Tokyo, Kyoto, Shiga

【Observation】 Panasonic Center Tokyo
【Observation】 Asakusa
【Observation, Opinion Exchange】 Research Institute for Humanity and Nature
of the National Institutes for the Humanities, Group discussions
【Observation】 Kinkakuji
**【Meeting with the Host Families, Homestay, Farewell Party with the Host
Families】** Higashiomi City, Shiga
【Japanese Cultural Experience】 Omamori amulet making (Tarobogu Shrine)
【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program
findings, preparation of action plans)

Group B: Tokyo, Aichi

【Company Visit】 Shinkansen General Control Center (Central Japan
Railway Company (JR Tokai) Command Center)
【Observation】 Asakusa
【Japanese Cultural Experience】 Weaving experience at Sanshu Asuke Yashiki
(bamboo coaster making)
【Observation】 Toyota Ecoful Town
**【Meeting with the Host Families, Homestay, Farewell Party with the Host
Families】** Toyota City, Aichi
【Experience】 Test-ride on the Linimo maglev (Aichi Rapid Transit Tobu Kyuryo
Line)
【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program
findings, preparation of action plans)

Jan. 15 (Mon) **【Reporting Session】** Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans
 Jan. 16 (Tue) **【Observation】** Free stroll around Tokyo
 Departure from Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Inbound Program

	
January 10 【Observation】 Tokyo National Museum	January 10 【Observation】 National Diet Building
	
January 10 【Briefing】 First North America Division, North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)	January 11 【Lecture, Opinion Exchange】 “What if you were Japan's Prime Minister?”

Group A (Locations: Tokyo, Kyoto, Shiga)

	
January 11 【Observation】 Panasonic Center Tokyo	January 11 【Observation】 Asakusa



January 12 **【Observation, Opinion Exchange】**
Research Institute for Humanity and Nature of
the National Institutes for the Humanities, Group
discussions



January 12 **【Observation】** Kinkakuji



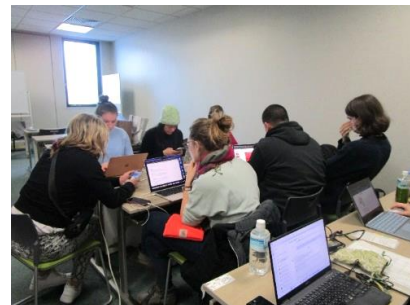
January 13 **【Meeting with the Host Families】**
Higashiomi City, Shiga



January 14 **【Farewell Party with the Host Families】**



January 14 **【Japanese Cultural Experience】**
Tarobogu Shrine (Omamori amulet making)



January 14 **【Workshop】**

Group B (Locations: Tokyo, Aichi)

	
January 11 【Company Visit】 Shinkansen General Control Center (Central Japan Railway Company (JR Tokai) Command Center)	January 12 【Japanese Cultural Experience】 Weaving experience at Sanshu Asuke Yashiki (bamboo coaster making)
	
January 12 【Observation】 Toyota Ecoful Town	January 12 【Meeting with the Host Families】 Toyota City, Aichi
	
January 14 【Farewell Party with the Host Families】	January 14 【Workshop】
	
January 15 【Reporting Session】	January 15 【Reporting Session】 Group photo

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Graduate Student

I believe the host family stay was a unique opportunity to understand Japanese culture, way of life, and general perspectives on life and on the United States held by ordinary Japanese people. Our host families were very gracious and kind, and the bonds we forged will be a long-lasting bridge between American and Japanese societies.

◆ Graduate Student

The visit to the JR Shinkansen office was fascinating. I've obviously heard of the shinkansen before, but actually seeing the amount of work that goes into making the whole system run with such precision was a valuable experience, particularly because it is such an iconic piece of the foreign perception of Japan (most Americans know about it and consider it extremely impressive). It was especially interesting that we got to ride it afterwards. It really helped me appreciate an experience that I might have otherwise just viewed, as I do for American public transportation, as a means to an end.

◆ Graduate Student

Visiting with the host family in Higashiomi was a special experience. It was wonderful to be welcomed into the family's home as a part of their family and learn more about how they live. I appreciated every part of the program. It was well-organized, and I was able to view a variety of aspects of Japanese society. It was also nice to visit MOFA and engage in conversation with Professor TANIGUCHI about issues of security and other foreign relations challenges for the United States and Japan.

◆ Graduate Student

I really enjoyed the balance of cultural activities and tourist activities on this trip with the lectures and site visits. One of the most impressive parts of the program was the homestay, in which each of us got to experience Japanese culture firsthand. I loved the experience of interacting closely with our host family and helping cook, holding conversations about our lives, and learning more about their everyday lives. I also enjoyed our lecture with the Professor on “becoming Japan’s Prime Minister,” in which we gained insight to his perspectives on the greatest challenges facing Japan today.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Observation Destination

The participants were from a wide range of specialty areas, but I am glad they all seemed to enjoy the program with a broad scope of interest. There were moments when we had to find our way through, thinking how best to carry on a discussion with participants of differing specialties, but I think even that was a good experience for both sides.

◆ **Cooperating Organization**

It was most rewarding to see the host families welcome the participants so cheerfully. With the participants also displaying an eagerness to enjoy their experience, I am certain the synergy added much to the excitement of the homestay program.

◆ **Host Family**

I think we were able to successfully introduce Japanese culture and customs to the participants by having them experience Japanese New Year's traditions (mochi pounding, Kagamimochi rice cake, cocoon-ball decorations, etc.).

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

 What a day! The first full day of my KAKEHASHI Project trip to Japan was fantastic. I've been able to learn so much about Japanese culture and government, and I look forward to learning even more! Our first stop of the day was to the Tokyo National Museum to experience the history and art of the country. In the afternoon, we received a tour of the Japanese Diet Building, home of their national legislative branch. We capped it off with a visit to (and briefing from) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I'm excited to take the lessons we've learned here back to public policy initiatives in the States. I've loved this experience so far and I can't wait to see what the rest of it looks like! #Kakehashi2023 #KakehashiProject	 bbyannc Another amazing day with #kakehashi2023 discussing US-Japan diplomacy efforts at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, learning about Panasonic's past, present, and future innovations, engaging with an esteemed professor and public diplomacy expert, and visiting Asakusa! @jice_exchange #kakehashiproject
January 10, 2024 (Facebook, etc.) What a day! The first full day of my KAKEHASHI Project trip to Japan was fantastic. I've been able to learn so much about Japanese culture and politics, I look forward to learning even more! Our first stop of the day was to the Tokyo National Museum to experience the history and art of the country. In the afternoon, we received a tour of the National Diet Building, home of their national legislative branch. We capped it off with a visit to (and briefing from) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I'm excited to take the lessons we've learned here back to public policy initiatives in the States. I've loved this experience so far and I can't wait to see what the rest of it looks like!	January 10, 2024 (Instagram) Another amazing day with KAKEHASHI 2023, discussing US-Japan diplomacy efforts at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, learning about Panasonic's past, present, and future innovations, engaging with an esteemed professor and public diplomacy expert, and visiting Asakusa!

January 12, 2024 (Facebook) I got to go to Nagoya Castle, shrines in both Asakusa and Nagoya, and the national museum in Tokyo! Learning about Japan's long history and culture through the KAKEHASHI program is such an honor. The National Museum has 12,000 years of history and an abundance of traditional art, writing, and clothes.	January 12, 2024 (Instagram) KAKEHASHI Project Day 4: A day of many firsts! First time in a bullet train and getting to see Mount Fuji steadily growing on the horizon. First time in Kyoto, where our group got to engage in discussion with researchers at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature. First experience at Kinkakuji Temple, its golden façade sparkling in a rain-specked lake reflection. And first time having tofu hotpot!

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

Group A (Locations: Tokyo, Kyoto, Shiga)

Excerpts from the presentations made by all three groups

【What we Learned】 Current challenges facing Japan include an aging population, climate change, economic transitions, and maritime security threats. Additionally, we were able to experience firsthand the composition and texture of Japan's social fabric, its way of weaving together duty, family, nature, and unity, as well as its unique approaches to the preservation of history and culture, integration with nature, and		

architecture.

【Action Plan】

Within three months, we will work with relevant institutions in our respective universities to share our experiences of the KAKEHASHI program.

1. The Fletcher School at Tufts University: Fletcher's Office of Communications, Public Relations & Marketing will post an article on Fletcher's website and advertise it on LinkedIn and the official Facebook and Instagram accounts. This post will feature what KAKEHASHI participants learned about Japan during their trip.
2. University of California, Berkeley: The Center for Japanese Studies at UC Berkeley will host a series of blog posts, available online and also broadcast via email to university faculty, staff, students, and alumni, as well as Japanese partners and researchers. We will share our experiences of the KAKEHASHI Program in both words and images, focusing on culture, history and futurity.
3. Stanford University: The Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies will invite a MOFA representative to speak on campus, and the Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (on campus) will publish a blog post on the KAKEHASHI experience. Additionally, a panel discussion will be held for interested students who wish to study in Japan or participate in future exchange programs, and approaches will be made to the Japan club to promote joint cultural activities on campus.

Group B (Locations: Tokyo, Aichi)

Excerpts from the presentations made by all two groups



Action Plan

What?	To whom?	When?	Where?	Why?	How?
Participants in the Kakehashi program	Japanese Graduate/Post graduate Student associations	During the middle of spring semester	Respective local/university communities	To foster understanding, learning, and exchange between the United States/Japan	By working closely with both the Japanese department and various organizations in our universities



【What we Learned】

- Environment: The focus is on promoting long-term sustainability, with notable activities in the energy sector.
- Diplomacy: Japan is promoting policies as a leader in the Asian region, such as FOIP.
- Culture and tradition: The key word is "fusion of tradition and modernity."

【How to use your experience in Japan for your future career】

- International relations: We will research the role of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and its assistance and support to countries in the southern hemisphere.
- Through the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" concept, we would like to be involved in the promotion of Japan-U.S. technical and business cooperation.

【Action Plan】

Working closely with the Japanese language departments and student associations at each of our universities, we will promote understanding, learning, and exchange between the U.S. and Japan to Japanese students in the graduate and undergraduate student associations on campus and to students seeking employment in Japan or with organizations related to foreign affairs. The program will be held in each university during the spring semester.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)