



## **Invitation Program for Okinawa Program the 1st Slot (Roosevelt High School) Report**

### **1. Program Overview**

**【Objective】** In this program, students from Roosevelt High School in Oregon, U.S.A., were invited to Japan to deepen their understanding of Japanese politics, economy, society, culture, history, and foreign policies through a homestay experience, school exchange, and observations in Okinawa Prefecture. The program also aimed to strengthen the KAKEHASHI network by providing an opportunity for the participants to deepen exchanges with each other and having them actively disseminate Japan's attractions from their standpoint as high school students.

The Okinawa program is a mutual exchange program for high school students in the U.S. and Japan. In November 2023, students of Okinawa Prefectural Yaeyama High School visited Oregon under this program.

**【Participants】** Total: 15 high school students and their chaperones from the U.S.  
13 students from Roosevelt High School in Oregon, 2 chaperones

**【Locations】** Tokyo, Kanagawa, Okinawa

#### **【Program Schedule】**

##### **■ Pre-study Program (Online)**

Feb. 6 (Tue) **【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**

Feb. 11 (Sun) Arrival at Haneda Airport

#### **【Orientation】**

Feb. 12 (Mon) **【Lecture】** "Sexual Minority Rights Issues in Japan and Our Initiatives"

Lecturer: Ms. SHIMOMURA Saki Marin, Research Assistant, Schoonmaker Memorial Center for Gender Studies at Aoyama Gakuin University

**【Student Exchange】** Workshop with Aoyama Gakuin University students

**【Observation, Japanese Cultural Experience】** Asakusa, Matcha experience (at Kaminari Issa)

Feb. 13 (Tue) Travel from Tokyo to Okinawa

Feb. 14 (Wed) **【Observation】** Taketomi Island (water buffalo cart ride)

**【Meeting with the Host Families】**

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| Feb. 15 (Thu) | <b>【School Exchange】</b> Okinawa Prefectural Yaeyama High School<br><b>【Homestay】</b> 8 households in Ishigaki City, Okinawa                     |
| Feb. 16 (Fri) | <b>【Workshop】</b> Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)<br>Travel back to Tokyo     |
| Feb. 17 (Sat) | <b>【Observation】</b> Toshiba Science Museum<br><b>【Observation】</b> Meiji Jingu, Harajuku (Japan's pop culture)<br>Departure from Haneda Airport |
| Feb. 18 (Sun) | <b>【Reporting Session】</b> Presentations of program findings and action plans<br>Departure from Haneda Airport                                   |

## 2. Program Photos

### Inbound Program

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| February 12 <b>【Lecture】</b> "Sexual Minority Rights Issues in Japan and Our Initiatives" | February 12 <b>【Student Exchange】</b> Workshop with Aoyama Gakuin University students |
|        |   |
| February 12 <b>【Observation, Japanese Cultural Experience】</b> Asakusa, Matcha experience | February 14 <b>【Observation】</b> Taketomi Island (water buffalo cart ride)            |



February 14 【Meeting with the Host Families】



February 15 【School Exchange】  
Okinawa Prefectural Yaeyama High School



February 15 【Homestay】 Ishigaki City, Okinawa



February 16 【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session



February 17 【Observation】  
Toshiba Science Museum



February 17 【Observation】  
Meiji Jingu, Harajuku (Japan's pop culture)



February 18 【Reporting Session】  
Commemorative photo

### 3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

#### ◆ High School Student

The school exchange was fun, enlightening and impactful, as sharing differences between schools in the U.S. and schools in Japan (such as wearing school uniforms, having lunch, etc.) highlighted our differences and similarities.

#### ◆ High School Student

Our host family was so nice and I had so much fun hanging out with them and learning about their life and culture. I was impressed by how welcoming and kind the family and students were and how they engaged us in conversation.

#### ◆ High School Student

Just being able to hang out with the Yaeyama high school students and spend a normal day with them was wonderful. It was interesting to learn about the activities they have compared to my school, as well as about Japanese culture and the manners they showed us.

### 4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

#### ◆ Lecturer

The group of participants was from a region that embraces LGBT in the community. Nonetheless, I was surprised that they had substantial awareness and knowledge of LGBT rights and politics despite still being high school students. It was also a learning experience on my side to hear the opinions of American high school students firsthand.

#### ◆ Exchange School Faculty

Our students seemed to enjoy the exchange with Roosevelt High School students very much. I even had some students who came to tell me that they had so much fun that they wish to be the ones to go to the U.S. next time.

### 5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)



1- Asakusa temple, amazingly pretty and a really good experience 2- Shopping near the temple, there was so many shops I could explore there all day 3- Matcha experience, making matcha for the first time. It was super fun and delicious especially the sweet that paired with it, would do again 10/10. 4- Street food, super delicious. 5- more street food, made me want to try and make it, best strawberries i've ever had. 6- Dinner! We got to cook the food how we liked in a hotpot, super delicious and fun. 7- Magazines and face mask I got at a convenience store. 8- Tokyo sky tree! breathtaking and super fun exploring the shops around it. 10- street at night while walking around. #kakehashiproject #kakehashiproject2023



Exchange at Yaeyama High school in Ishigaki, I had lots of fun and i'll never forget it! Everyone was so nice and it was great to meet new friends! I thank my host siblings and family for showing so much hospitality and I hope to come back to Ishigaki! #kakehashiproject #kakehashiproject2023

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| <p>February 17, 2024 (Instagram)</p> <p>Asakusa temple was amazingly pretty and it was a really good experience shopping near the temple where there were many shops. I enjoyed experiencing matcha for the first time and found it delicious especially when paired with Japanese sweets. Street food was super delicious and made me want to try more of it. The strawberries were the best I've ever had. For dinner, we cooked a hotpot, which was super delicious and fun. We went to a convenience store and bought magazines and face masks. At Tokyo Skytree, it was breathtaking and super fun to explore the shops around it. It was also fun strolling through the streets.</p> | <p>February 17, 2024 (Instagram)</p> <p>The exchange at Yaeyama High School in Ishigaki was lots of fun, and I'll never forget it! Everyone was so nice and it was great to meet new friends. I thank my host family and friends for showing so much hospitality and hope to come back to Ishigaki!</p> |
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## 6. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Locations: Tokyo, Kanagawa, Okinawa (Presentations by all 2 groups)

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| <p><b>Action plan #1</b></p> <p><b>What?</b> We will share the food that we experienced here in Japan to our loved ones (family, friends, classmates)</p> <p><b>Why?</b> To share the very different flavors of Japan and how they all collaborate with each other to make a delicious combination of food</p> <p><b>When?</b> It can be done when family's would want a change in meals and during a holiday that is celebrated in Japan</p> <p><b>Who?</b> Participants of kakehashi project</p> <p><b>To whom?</b> To family members and close friends, people who also want to try Japanese food that is not ramen or sushi.</p> <p><b>How?</b> Print out a recipe of a traditional/common food that is eaten in Tokyo/Okinawa and prepare it with family and friends</p>  | <p><b>LGBTQ Lecture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political and cultural lecture/discussion</li> <li>Met with students from Aoyama University</li> </ul> <p>Meeting everyone who attended that lecture was a fun and eye-opening experience. We learned the strong differences between American and Japanese politics and government.</p> <p>While both sides have their ups and downs, we can all agree that what we learned won't hold us back from making connections across countries, and will strengthen them instead.</p>      |
| <p><b>【What we Learned】</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tradition and customs are very important and are passed down through the generations.</li> <li>We found beautiful Meiji Jingu surrounded by nature, the Senso-ji building, and the Shinto custom of washing your hands and mouth before making a wish.</li> <li>We were inspired by the rural culture of Ishigaki Island, the school life, the lifestyle we experienced during our homestay, and the delicious meals of fresh vegetables and fish.</li> <li>In an urban city, we were impressed by</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p><b>【What we Learned】</b></p> <p>In Asakusa, we experienced a high-quality tea culture that we do not have in America, and at Meiji Jingu, we indulged in the beauty of traditional Japanese clothing and architecture while experiencing the traditional Shinto culture of offering prayers. On the other hand, we witnessed iconic J-fashion and pop culture in Harajuku and Akihabara and were surprised at how clean the streets are even without trash cans anywhere. We felt that commercial facilities create a lively atmosphere and contribute to Japan's thriving economy.</p> <p>We also experienced and learned about the</p> |

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| <p>high-tech toilets, vending machines, QR codes, the linear motorcar, and advanced technologies of the future.</p> <p>( ) 【Action plan】</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Individual activity: We will each print out and share recipes of Japanese foods we experienced in Tokyo and Okinawa so they can be made when the family wishes to eat something different from the ordinary.</li> <li>➤ As a group, we will introduce activities where students of Roosevelt High School can have fun competing against other classes while relaxing and enjoying the company of their peers. This idea was inspired by school events in Japan.</li> </ul> | <p>development of science and technology at Toshiba Science Museum, and hope to take back with us the advanced concepts to our country.</p> <p>The wildlife was beautiful and the culture was rich on Taketomi Island, and we learned how the people maintain a deep connection with their community in their daily lives.</p> <p>【Action Plan】</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Next month, we will give slideshow presentations, as a group and individually, to share our experiences and introduce Japanese culture to students of Japanese language classes and people interested in Japan.</li> <li>2. By March 2024, a member of our group will give a presentation on the diverse and unique ecosystem of Yaeyama Islands using facts and photos pertaining to the islands to environmental science students.</li> <li>3. By April 2024, slide groups will create a film using photos and videos from the KAKEHASHI Program and distribute it as a Vlog on YouTube, to increase the number of future participants to the KAKEHASHI Project.</li> </ol> |
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**Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)**