



KAKEHASHI Project (United States)
Invitation Program for KAKEHASHI Inouye the 1st Slot
(Loyola Marymount University) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】

Undergraduate students from Loyola Marymount University in California were invited to Japan with the main objectives of deepening their understanding of Japanese society, culture, and history; strengthening the ties between Japan and the United States; and having them actively disseminate the attractions of Japan to the world after participating in a school exchange, homestay, peace studies, and other activities. This program was implemented in cooperation with the U.S.-Japan Council.

【Participants】 Total: 16 undergraduate students and faculty members from Loyola Marymount University (LMU)

【Locations】 Tokyo, Hiroshima

【Program Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Feb. 15 (Thu) **【Pre-departure Orientation】** Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warnings, 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. 23 (Fri) Arrival at Haneda Airport

【Orientation】

Feb. 24 (Sat) Travel from Tokyo to Hiroshima

【Meeting with the Host Families, Homestay】

4 households in Kitahiroshima-cho, Hiroshima

Feb. 25 (Sun) **【Farewell Party with the Host Families】**

【Observation】 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

Feb. 26 (Mon) **【Observation】** Itsukushima Shrine, Miyajima Island

【Observation】 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum: Visiting atomic

	bombed buildings and trees 【Lecture】 Atomic bombed Legacy Successor
Feb. 27 (Tue)	Travel from Hiroshima to Tokyo 【Observation】 Azabudai Hills 【Courtesy Call】 U.S. Embassy
Feb. 28 (Wed)	【School Exchange】 Sophia University 【Observation】 Panasonic Center Tokyo
Feb. 29 (Thu)	【Courtesy Call】 Mr. HOSAKA Yasushi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs 【Observation】 Tokyo National Museum 【Workshop】 Preparation for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)
Mar. 1 (Fri)	【Observation】 Meiji-jingu, Harajuku (Japanese pop-culture) 【Reporting Session】 Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans 【Exchange Session】 U.S.-Japan Council (panel discussion) Departure from Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Inbound Program

	
February 24 【Meeting with the Host Families】	February 25 【Farewell Party with the Host Families】
	
February 26 【Observation】 Itsukushima Shrine, Miyajima Island	February 26 【Lecture】 Atomic bombed Legacy Successor

	
February 27 【Courtesy Call】 U.S. Embassy	February 28 【School Exchange】 Sophia University
	
February 29 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. HOSAKA Yasushi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs	March 1 【Observation】 Meiji-jingu
	
March 1 【Reporting Session】	March 1 【Exchange Session】 U.S.-Japan Council ~ Panel discussion

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Undergraduate Student

The most impressive parts of the exchange program were the homestay, visiting Panasonic, the A-bomb Museum, and the Peace Memorial Park.

The homestay allowed me to understand rural Japan and the social aspects of a rural family's home. As an engineer (major), Panasonic was very interesting since I was viewing the future technologies they were creating, as well as their purpose for constructing those products. Lastly,

the A-bomb Museum and the Peace Memorial Park provided me with a different perspective of how the strategy affected not only both countries but the people of Japan throughout the years, which can be very different from what you may hear or are taught in school.

◆ **Undergraduate Student**

I found it impressive how the schedule was very organized and that everything happened on time. I liked that we were able to visit different aspects of Japanese culture and history and the activities were very engaging and interactive. I most especially enjoyed the homestay in Hiroshima as it allowed me to share a deeper connection with Japanese people.

◆ **Undergraduate Student**

Visiting Sophia University and our time at the homestay in Kita-Hiroshima were the two most memorable and impressive parts of the exchange program. Meeting the students at Sophia University and getting to understand their university experience was very insightful in learning about cross cultural values and building bonds with people in a new place.

The opportunity to do the homestay was also incredibly impressive because not only were we able to get first-hand experience into what life in Kita-Hiroshima was like but we were also welcomed into a family that showed us so much love and kindness despite our language and cultural barriers.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ **Exchange School Faculty Member**

It was great to see our students and the students of LMU getting along with each other so well. The LMU students in particular seemed to know how to break the ice in the blink of an eye, and as someone in charge of receiving international students, I found it very enlightening. The LMU students were very interested in our university, and I believe this helped in making the time we had with them all the more meaningful.

◆ **Exchange School Student**

I remember the icebreaker on the day we first met. It was the first time for me to dance as part of an icebreaker, and I found it interesting and fun. The fact that there are dances that anybody in the U.S. can dance and how well the LMU students were able to get into the groove and immediately move made me realize that people in the U.S. are particularly social and must have many opportunities to dance. Also, although there was one person in charge of the icebreaker and another as the moderator, I was given the impression that everyone was working together to create the event, rather than leaving everything up to the two main people. Even though I am not an LMU student, I could easily understand what was going on and join in on the conversations.

◆ **Host Family**

Although everyone in my family doesn't speak English all that well, we were able to deepen our

exchange through the different activities that we played together. One of the most memorable moments was when everyone (four of us) learned how to play a flute made from kuma bamboo grass and became so happy when we got the hang of it. Our children's interest in different cultures and foreign countries has grown thanks to this homestay.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

 WHO TELLS YOUR STORY? Today, we witnessed the work done by the people of Hiroshima prefecture to preserve the trees that survived the atomic bomb and its trees to advocate for world peace. We listened to the story of a living hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bomb, told by a legacy speaker. Listening to the speaker share how painful it was for the hibakusha throughout her life physically, socially, and mentally was... a bit saddening, but extremely empowering. It struck something within me. The hibakusha suffered so much from the atomic bomb—she lost her sister, her left eye, and her dream. She experienced more than five different forms of cancer and social ostracization growing up post-atomic bomb, but she is a survivor, and in a way, a resilient warrior who refuses to give up. I cannot imagine how much she struggled to battle the unfortunate forces thrown at her as a young teenager. Although she wasn't here to share her story in person, I thank her for her courage in sharing her story with us and hope she's finally able to live her life fully with love and peace without pain.	 Imuapss Enjoy our Japan recap of our TOMODACHI Inouye Scholars on their trip! Thank you to the U.S.-Japan Council and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this enriching Kakehashi experience in Japan! #kakehashiproject2023
February 26, 2024 (Facebook, etc.) Today, we witnessed the work done by the people of Hiroshima prefecture to preserve the trees that survived the atomic bomb and its trees to advocate for world peace. We listened to the story of a living hibakusha, a survivor of the atomic bomb, told by a legacy speaker. Listening to the speaker share how painful it was for the hibakusha throughout her life physically, socially, and mentally was... a bit saddening, but extremely empowering. It struck something within me. The hibakusha suffered so much from the atomic bomb—she lost her sister, her left eye, and her dream. She experienced more than	March 12, 2024 (Instagram) Enjoy our Japan recap of our TOMODACHI Inouye Scholars on their trip! Thank you to the U.S.-Japan Council and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this enriching Kakehashi experience in Japan!

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

Locations: Tokyo, Hiroshima (Presentations by all three groups)

Group 1		
		
【What we Learned】 Respect and consideration for others was seen everywhere in Japanese society, but they especially cared for their families, communities, and the environment, and they tried to interact sincerely even if they did not speak the same language. Additionally, the richness of Japanese food is astounding. There are elements such as valuing the ingredients themselves, the fun of cooking together, and the beauty of presentation. 【Application】 The peace learning programs in Hiroshima inspired awareness of nuclear weapons. The US government has not officially apologized for dropping the atomic bombs, which is a problem. We realized that it is important for us Americans to fully understand what happened in the past in order to build peace in the future. 【Action Plan】 From March to May, all group members will get involved in creating a website in collaboration with Loyola Marymount University's Global Policy Institute, targeting the university community in order to raise awareness on A-bomb survivors and help them learn more about Hibakusha. We will share testimonials and the reality of the lasting impact on Japanese society. We hope that this will raise		

anti-nuclear awareness and ultimately support organizations that advocate universal peace. We will also set up a booth on Wellness Wednesday where everyone can fold at least 1,000 origami cranes to donate to the Manzanar concentration camp so that the memories of the last war will not fade.

Group 2



【What we Learned】

Compared to the individualistic America, we were impressed by the "selfless" nature of Japan. I was especially surprised when one Japanese person sitting in front of me on the Shinkansen went out of his way to ask, "Can I recline my seat?", and I felt that they were considerate of others. During the homestay, even though they weren't living under the same roof, family came together to eat dinner. We witnessed family life and felt the strength of family bonds that take care of elderly parents. The concept of "time management" was also new to me.

There were many discoveries that we would like to take back to the United States, such as "act five-minute before" and the minute-by-minute timeline during the visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

【Application】

When interacting with people in a foreign country, we were able to keep in mind that we are representing not only Loyola Marymount University but also the American people, and we were prepared to be careful about our words and actions. Since Japanese people value gratitude, we wanted to remember to express our gratitude to the university's janitors and local garbage collectors.

【Action Plan】

FUSION, a multinational event where organizations come together for one night to celebrate the uniqueness of their lifestyles and cultures, will be held at Loyola Marymount University. The idea is to create a shared space to promote cross-cultural exchange and understanding, not only between Japan and the United States, through art, music, dance, food, and more.

Since it is a large-scale event, there will be fundraising and negotiations with related organizations, so I think it will take about a year from preparation to implementation.

By sharing this, we believe we can understand and connect the differences between different cultures.

Group 3





【What we Learned】

We had been watching Japanese anime and movies, so we had some knowledge before coming to Japan, and we also remembered the news about Japanese people bringing home trash at the FIFA World Cup, but when we actually visited Japan and experienced it, we realized that there were more discoveries. The comfort and its punctuality of Shinkansen and the clean sidewalks with absolutely no littering. The command of "itadakimasu" to express gratitude to the people who prepared the food and the ecosystem was refreshing, and we thought it was wonderful that they were promoting environmentally friendly hydrogen energy. It was also a great learning experience for us to discover that there are many ways to communicate even though languages and cultures are different.

【Application】

We want to bring back what we learned from our homestay experience: the learning that people can interact despite language and cultural barriers.

We would also like to share the similarities between the experiences of Japanese Hibakushas in Japan and Japanese Americans in the US, as seen in the Origami Crane Campaign.

After visiting Japan's cutting-edge technology showroom (such as Panasonic), some of us started thinking about getting a job at a Japanese company.

【Action Plan】

We will host a workshop for Loyola Marymount University (LMU) students.

In addition to introducing the Kakehashi Tomodachi Inouye Scholars Program (TISP), we would like to share an overview of the opportunities we have learned about visiting Japan, studying abroad, internships, careers, and language exchanges to revitalize future U.S.-Japan exchanges.

We will also conduct a survey of workshop participants to verify the extent to which they actually expressed interest.

As for timing, we plan to take action as soon as we return to the US, open our doors to students, and gradually bring in more students.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)