



KAKEHASHI Project (United States)

Invitation Program for University Students the 3rd Slot

(Central Connecticut State University, University of Miami) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 The main objectives of the program were to have university students from Central Connecticut State University in Connecticut and the University of Miami in Florida visit Japan to deepen their understanding of Japanese politics, economy, society, culture, history, and foreign policy through homestays, school exchanges, and observation visits, as well as to strengthen their networks and have them proactively disseminate the attractions of Japan.

【Participants】 Total 17 participants – 14 University students and 3 faculty members from the U.S. (Breakdown) Central Connecticut State University, Connecticut - 8 participants (7 university students and 1 faculty member) / University of Miami, Florida - 9 participants (7 university students and 2 faculty members)

【Locations】 Group A (Central Connecticut State University): Tokyo, Ehime
Group B (University of Miami): Kyoto, Shiga, Tokyo

【Program Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Mar. 4 (Mon) 【Pre-departure Orientation】 Program objectives and mission, itinerary outline, travel precautions, COVID-19 preventative measures, etc.

Set Period Prior to Arrival 【Video Viewing】 Lecture “Japan and the United Nations”, “Lecture on Japan” (Choose on Web Japan)

■ Inbound Program:

Mar. 8 (Fri) Arrival at Haneda Airport

Mar. 9 (Fri) ~ Mar. 13 (Wed)

Participants were separated into 2 groups: Group A visited Tokyo and Ehime, and Group B visited Kyoto and Shiga.

Group A (Central Connecticut State University): Tokyo, Ehime

 【Observation】 National Diet Building

Travel from Tokyo to Ehime

 【Home Visit】 Imabari City, Ehime

 【School Exchange】 Ehime University

 【Observation】 Matsuyama Castle, Isaniwa Shrine, Exploring Dogo-onsen

【Cultural Experience】 Zazen, Copying Sutra in Sairyuji Temple
 【Observation】 Exploring the Kamihagatei residence & Uchiko Town
 Travel from Ehime to Tokyo

Group B (University of Miami): Kyoto, Shiga

【Observation】 Kiyomizu Temple (Artists' Fair Kyoto 2024)
 【Meeting with the Host Families】
 【Homestay】 Hino Town, Shiga
 【Farewell Party with the Host Families】
 【Cultural Experience】 Yuzen Dyeing
 【Observation】 Kenninji Temple
 【School Exchange】 Kyoto Seika University
 【Observation】 KYOCERA Museum of Art, Yasaka Shrine, Nishiki-ichiba
 Travel from Kyoto to Tokyo

Mar. 13 (Wed) 【Observation】 Meiji-jingu Shrine, Harajuku (Japanese pop-culture)
 Mar. 14 (Thu) 【Observation】 Tokyo National Museum
 【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)
 【Workshop】
 Mar. 15 (Fri) 【Reporting Session】 Presentation of program findings and action plans
 【Observation】 Odaiba (Central Connecticut State University only)
 Departure from Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Inbound Program

Group A (Central Connecticut State University)



March 9 【Observation】 National Diet Building



March 10 【Home Visit】



March 11 **【School Exchange】**
Ehime University



March 11 **【Observation】** Matsuyama Castle



March 12 **【Cultural Experience】** Zazen



March 12 **【Observation】**
Exploring Uchiko Town

Group B (University of Miami)



March 9 **【Observation】**
Kiyomizu Temple (Artists' Fair Kyoto 2024)



March 10 **【Homestay】**



March 11 **【Cultural Experience】** Yuzen Dyeing



March 11 **【Observation】** Kenninji Temple

	
March 12 【School Exchange】 Kyoto Seika University	March 12 【Observation】 Yasaka Shrine
	
March 13 【Observation】 Meiji-jingu Shrine	March 15 【Reporting Session】 Commemorative photo

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ University Student

I was most impressed with my home visit; I believe this was an invaluable experience that allowed me to practice speaking Japanese with native speakers. This was the first time I'd ever spoken confidently with native speakers, and I had a great time with them. I also had the opportunity to try and cook Japanese food alongside my host family. They involved us in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony which was incredibly fun, and it was interesting to see the cultural significance that tea plays in Japanese society.

◆ University Student

The home visit portion of the program was very impressionable as we were able to see the everyday lives of Japanese people and experience firsthand the kindness of the Japanese people. The visits to various temples were also amazing, as we got to learn more about traditional Japanese customs and history in general.

◆ University Student

The best part of the program was the homestay for sure. The best part of the homestay was getting to learn about local Japanese customs like the doll festival and shrine rituals. This component allowed me to experience the daily life of a traditional Japanese farmer and allowed me to connect with Japanese culture through firsthand experience.

◆ **University Student**

I really enjoyed the home stays in Hino and our guest lecture/school exchange at Seika University. The home stays were such an incredible immersive experience that really made me feel integrated in Japanese culture and customs. Similarly, the guest lecture on Manga was a great introduction to Japanese universities and students, as well as an art form that is not totally popular in the U.S.

◆ **University Student**

The most impressive part during my exchange program I would say would be Matsuyama Castle. Matsuyama Castle is absolutely breathtaking. I feel that during this trip I was able to step out of my comfort zone and experience more than I would normally be comfortable with. It was a very rewarding and fun experience to remember!

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ **Cooperating Organization**

Although we are a rural town in Shiga with few opportunities to be visited by people from overseas, we were reminded that there are many things that attract the interest of students who like art and fine arts. The participants communicated their best with us, even though they didn't speak the language, and we were happy to hear the students comment that they felt the warmth and importance of cooking and sharing a meal together, which was exactly what we wanted to express in receiving the participants.

◆ **Host Family**

The students were all polite, earnest, and very attentive, which made a very good impression. I am very pleased to say that the program was very useful for my grandchildren to learn about foreign languages and international understanding.

They enjoyed making okonomiyaki and onigiri, and were delighted when I dressed them in kimonos, and I am glad that I was able to play a small part in introducing Japanese culture to them. We hope to accept more and more homestays and home visits in the future.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

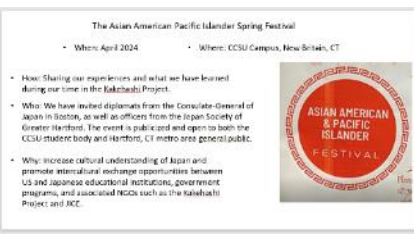
 Matsuyama Japan A day in Matsuyama Japan with the Yamashita's Thank you for the amazing opportunity you've provided me and my classmate. #matsuyamajapan2024 #kakehashi2024 #kakehashiobject From ホテルサンルート, Lum Bichag and I were lucky to have a room facing east. Japan's sunrises are beautiful! 	On Saturday, we woke up early to have a Japanese Style Western Food, with some Udon. It was very delicious, the Japanese style cooking techniques and ingredients really make a difference. Next, we went to the National Diet Building where the Japanese Minister works. We had a Tour around the inside of the building. Many places in Japan don't allow photos taken, so I only had photos when they said it was okay to take them. After, we went to Tokyo tower, the view is astonishing view, which is worth spending lots of time viewing. Great photos were taken of Mt. Fuji. Then, we had our 1hour 15 minute flight to Matsuyama airport in Ehime prefecture. There is a local mascot of an Orange (Fruit) Bear. There is a local type of Citrus that is unique to Matsuyama. Which is much more delicious than normal Oranges in America. Finally we went to our Hotel and Walked to our Dinner venue where we had some very delicious food. Sorry, I had not enough time to write in Japanese this time. Also, I'll be posting extra photos from this day soon Central Connecticut State University Kakehashi 2024 Joseph Lumpkin #kakehashi2024 #kakehashiobject
March 10, 2024 (Instagram) A day in Matsuyama Japan with our host family! Thank you for this amazing opportunity you've provided me and my classmate! From the hotel, we were lucky to have a room facing east. Japan's sunrises are beautiful!	March 10, 2024 (Instagram, etc.) On Saturday, we woke up early to have a Japanese Style Western Food, with some Udon. It was very delicious. The Japanese style cooking techniques and ingredients really make a difference. Next, we went to the National Diet Building. We had a Tour around the inside of the building. Many places in Japan don't allow photos taken, so I only had photos when they said it was okay to take them. After, we went to Tokyo tower, the view is astonishing, which is worth spending lots of time viewing. Great photos were taken of Mt. Fuji. Then, we flew to Matsuyama airport in Ehime prefecture. There is a local mascot of an Orange (Fruit) Bear. There is a local type of Citrus that is unique to Matsuyama. Which is much more delicious than normal Oranges in America. ...

 View insights Day 3: Home stays with local families in the charming village of Hino in #shiga prefecture with @jice_exchange @loweartmuseum... more	 An amazing day of art, learning, and friendship. @takashirom @ntimpiano @jice_exchange @loweartmuseum @um_arthistory #artlab2024 #jice #jice_exchange... more
March 12, 2024 (Instagram) Day 3: Home stays with local families in the charming village of Hino in #shiga prefecture	March 12, 2024 (Instagram) An amazing day of art, learning, and friendship.

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

Group A (Locations: Tokyo, Ehime), Group B (Locations: Kyoto, Shiga, Tokyo)

Presentations by a total of 2 groups.

Group A	
 Findings and Learning: Host Families and Students - Cultural Exchange Experience - Spending a day with Japanese families and students - Host families made connections with both Japanese students and Japanese culture - Allowed us to learn about Japanese culture on an intimate level - Shared in the similarities and differences between American society and Japanese society - Highlighted the difficulties of making interpersonal connections and the common experience to overcome with each other	 Findings and Learning: Sairyuji - Learned about historic Buddhist and seated meditation (connecting with reality of the void, embracing self) - Experiencing zazen (seated meditation) and sutra copying, learning about authentic Japanese Buddhist practice - Learning about the sacred image of Jizo, Buddhist sacred image, which was opened for us, a privilege reserved for the Chitō Minkōji no Kōshō - Tour of temples, Monji Trail with special Chitō session with Chitō Monji Kōshō
【What we Learned】 ● School Exchange Through exchanges with students around our age, we could relate to each other about university life and interests, and felt very close to one another, despite being geographically far apart. ● Home Visit There were times when I found it difficult to mix Japanese and English when speaking, but I learned that patience is necessary for intercultural exchanges. I was able to experience the differences between Japanese and U.S. society, which made me even more interested in Japan. ● Sairyuji Temple We experienced a 15-minute zazen meditation and sutra copying. The head priest gave a talk on Buddhism, and we experienced the practice of Buddhism. We were also able to see the Jizo Bodhisattva, which is open to the public only once every few years. Through this visit, we were able to learn about Japan's profound religious culture.	 The Asian American Pacific Islander Spring Festival - When: April 2024 - Where: CCSU Campus, New Britain, CT - How: Sharing our experiences and what we have learned during our time in the Kashiwaki Project - Who: We have invited diplomats from the Consulate General of Japan in Boston, as well as officers from the Japan Society of Greater Hartford. The event is publicized and open to both the CCSU student body and Hartford, CT metro area general public. - Why: Increase cultural understanding of Japan and promote international exchange opportunities between US and Japanese educational institutions, government programs, and associated NGOs such as the Kashiwaki Project and JICE.

【Action Plan】

● Presentation at our University

As part of the Asian American Pacific Islander Spring Festival event to be held this April, we will be presenting what we learned in this program at our University. Diplomats from the Consulate-General of Japan in Boston and officers from the Japan Society of Greater Hartford will be invited to participate, as well as students from our university and the general public from the surrounding area. This presentation will help to increase cultural understanding of Japan and promote intercultural exchange opportunities between U.S. and Japanese educational institutions, government programs, and associated NGOs such as the KAKEHASHI Project and JICE.

● Sakura tree planting event at the summer festival

Like last year, we will participate in this year's summer festival organized by the Japan Society of Greater Hartford. All participants of this program will help plant sakura (cherry) trees in the park. We believe that this will further strengthen the ties between our Japanese language program and the intercultural community.

● Article in our student newspaper

We will write an article about our KAKEHASHI Program experience in the student newspaper, "The Recorder," and encourage students to study abroad. This is because we believe experiencing foreign cultures first-hand is essential in building critical thinking and global perspectives.

Group B

 Building Bridges University of Miami (Kakehashi Project 2023-24 University Students 9th slide)	Buddhism  Scroll  Contemporary Art 	Action Plan • Between March 18 - April 24, 2024: Students will finish researching and writing individual essays for the Miya Ando: Sky Writing exhibition catalogue. • Conduct interviews with our local NPR radio station, WURN, about the JICE exchange and the exhibition. • Opening reception and artist talk: Thursday, April 25, 2024: • Champagne toast and remarks by Karuhito Nabe, Consul General of Japan to Miami • Artist talk by Miya Ando: "None to reveal" • Reception and viewing of the exhibition Miya Ando: Sky Writing • Finishing the online exhibition Miya Ando: Sky Writing for the Lowe Art Museum's website. • Distribution of the exhibition catalogues to other academic art museums and departments throughout the USA. • Publish a follow-up article on the JICE exchange and the exhibition in the College of Arts & Sciences magazine (at the University of Miami).
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【What we Learned】

During the homestay in Hino Town, we learned the importance of sharing through unique experiences such as mushroom cultivation, temple bell-ringing, and cooking together using home-grown vegetables.

We were able to see historical cultural assets such as swords at the Tokyo National Museum and the modern art of Takashi Murakami at the KYOCERA Museum of Art, which made us realize the importance of history and will be very helpful for our future research.

【Action Plan】

- We will submit an essay for the brochure of the upcoming Miya Ando exhibition at the University of Miami. The brochure will be distributed to museums and other institutions in the U.S.
- We will introduce this program and the exhibition in an interview by a local radio station.
- We will write a follow-up article about the program and the exhibition for the College of Arts & Sciences magazine on campus.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)