



KAKEHASHI Project (United States)

Visiting the U.S. Program for Inouye Program (Sophia University) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】

The Inouye Program is a mutual exchange program between university students from Japan and the United States. For this program, ten students from Sophia University were dispatched to California to promote understanding between Japan and the U.S. During their stay in the U.S., the participants learned about U.S.-Japan relations through visits to the U.S. Consulate General, Japanese American facilities, and exchanges with local students, deepening the friendship and trust between the U.S. and Japan. The participants learned and gained insights into different cultures and customs, and shared the attractions of Japan with the people they met at various exchange destinations.

【Participants】 Total: 10 participants (9 students and 1 faculty member from Sophia University)

【Location】 Independence, Claremont, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

【Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Feb. 17 (Mon) **【Pre-departure Orientation】** Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warnings, precautions of infectious disease, etc.

■ Dispatch Program:

Mar. 12 (Wed)	Departure from Haneda Airport, Arrival at Los Angeles International Airport 【School Exchange】 Loyola Marymount University
Mar. 13 (Thu)	【Observation】 The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. AOSHIMA Naoshige, Deputy Consul General, Consulate-General of Japan in Los Angeles 【Observation】 JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles
Mar. 14 (Fri)	【School Exchange】 Claremont Colleges
Mar. 15 (Sat)	【Observation】 Manzanar National Historic Site
Mar. 16 (Sun)	【Observation】 Little Tokyo 【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (Summarizing program findings and preparation of action plans)
Mar. 17 (Mon)	【School Exchange】 Loyola Marymount University 【Reporting Session】 Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans
Mar. 18 (Tue)	Departure from Los Angeles International Airport
Mar. 19 (Wed)	Arrival at Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos



March 12, 2025 【School Exchange】
Loyola Marymount University



March 13, 2025 【Observation】
The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles



March 13, 2025 【Courtesy Call】
Mr. AOSHIMA Naoshige, Deputy Consul General,
Consulate-General of Japan in Los Angeles



March 13, 2025 【Observation】
JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles



March 14, 2025 【School Exchange】
Claremont Colleges



March 15, 2025 【Observation】
Manzanar National Historic Site



March 16, 2025 【Observation】 Little Tokyo



March 16, 2025 【Workshop】



March 17, 2025 【School Exchange】
Loyola Marymount University



March 17, 2025 【Reporting Session】

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ University Student

I was overjoyed to have the opportunity to participate in this dispatch program and to reunite with participants from a previous invitation program to Tokyo and Miyagi. I was able to make many friends without borders, and I hope to cherish these friendships for years to come.

◆ University Student

Through our participation in the KAKEHASHI Project, we were able to gain countless valuable experiences and insights that we could not have obtained otherwise.

Moving forward, I hope to make the most of my experience as a KAKEHASHI Project participant by sharing what I learned with people and become a bridge between Japan and the United States.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Exchange School Student

This opportunity to visit each other's countries and deepen our mutual exchange was invaluable.

Spending so much time together allowed us to create unforgettable memories. As we can stay in touch at all times, I hope we can continue cherishing our friendship for years to come.

◆ Exchange School Faculty

We were pleasantly surprised to learn that our university would be able to have an exchange with Sophia University for the second year in a row. This is an incredibly valuable experience for our students, and if possible, we would be delighted to continue participating in such programs to further deepen exchanges.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt),

March 16, 2025 (Instagram) We visited LMU campus and gave a presentation about 3 different topics of Japanese culture, omotenashi spirit, culture seen in entertainment contents, and calligraphy. After dinner with LMU students, we had a bonfire on the beach. Thank you so much for your warm welcome!!	March 17, 2025 (Instagram) We visited Japan Foundation LA, In-N-Out for lunch break, Courtesy call at the Consulate of Japan in LA, and then Japan House in Hollywood. It was a great opportunity to know how they struggle to show the charm of Japan to people in the states.
March 14, 2025 (Instagram) Through conversations with the students here (at Claremont Colleges), I have noticed characteristics of Japan that I was not aware of before!	March 15, 2025 (Instagram) In 1942, over 110,000 Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes by the United States government. Despite this hard situation, Japanese American people managed to live with happiness making the best of their own abilities.

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

Presentation by a total of 3 groups

Group A			
Action Plan Presentation Kakehashi Inouye Scholar Program  Group A March, 2023	Finding - Both Manzanar and Little Tokyo highlight the deep significance of Home and Identity. - Despite historical hardships, Japanese-Americans have found ways to preserve their culture and a sense of belonging. - Understanding these struggles often offers valuable insights into how identity is shaped by history and place. 	FIND SOPHIA - Contribute to campus media "FIND SOPHIA" - Effective communication with a wide range of generations, including not only university-related people but also junior high school and high school students. Open Campus - As part of the student-teacher collaboration club activities to which shimo belongs, we will exhibit what we have learned through the Kakehashi Project during the open campus.	Presentation in High School - share what we learned through the program - give them a motivation to experience&respect the different cultures Presentation at Boston - Share experience on Manzanar and Little Tokyo - Promote discussions on home and identity → Aim to create a place for discussion, encouraging members to think about their own connections to identity and culture
【Results of the Program】 We learned that diplomacy can be carried out not only by diplomats and government officials but also by ordinary people, and that such cultural diplomacy is highly significant. We also learned that each ethnic group has its own community that strengthens the ties between people. 【Action Plan】 By August, we will have our experiences published in the on-campus media, and we will also present our experiences to visitors to the school at upcoming open campus events. We will also give presentations about what we learned at our old high schools.			
Group B			
 Final debriefing Group B	Learning Break free from our own way of thinking by talking with others from various backgrounds	Action Plans Increase the budget for government exchange programmes ↓ Expand the number of participants and a holistic learning effect 	
【Results of the Program】 Through this program, we learned that there are people who are trying to learn about Japan and people from different backgrounds who are trying to better understand one another through dialogue. We also learned about the hardships Japanese Americans have faced and the efforts they made to overcome those hardships. 【Action Plan】 We will petition the Congress to maintain the budget for future KAKEHASHI Project programs. First, within one month, we will research the budget currently being appropriated for this project and solicit supporters, and then within three months, we will carry out the actual petition.			

Group C

What we learned in
the states

80years bond between Japan and US
~built by Japanese Americans~



NOW

- many Americans have shown understanding towards the Japanese people
- Japanese made countless efforts in the US.

Action plan

Debriefing meeting

What we
thought



【Results of the Program】

We learned that the way history is taught in Japan and the U.S. differs, resulting in differences in people's perception of history. We also learned that there are facilities and locations all over Los Angeles that play a role in conveying Japanese culture to the public.

【Action Plan】

During the spring semester of next year, we will give a presentation to faculty and students on campus about the learnings and insights we gained from this program to let as many people as possible know about the results of the program. We will put up signs on campus to promote the presentation so that more people can come.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)