



KAKEHASHI Project (United States) Alumni Meeting (Washington D.C.) Follow-up Project Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective and Overview】 This program was conducted in the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.), U.S.A., on October 26, 2024, inviting past KAKEHASHI Project participants (alumni) to physically gather in support of alumni organizations/alumni groups and to experience Japanese culture. The aim of the program was to stimulate their interest in Japan by introducing alumni activities, the JET Program, the MEXT Scholarship, and having them participate in sake tasting, origami folding activities, etc. The main objective of the program was also to strengthen the alumni network by having alumni interact and ask each other questions.

【Participants】 Total 42 participants from the U.S. and Japan (FY2015-FY2024 KAKEHASHI Project alumni)

(Breakdown) 41 participants from the U.S. (6 undergraduate/graduate students, 35 working youths)

1 participant from Japan (1 graduate student)

6 guests and stakeholders

Mr. Frank Jannuzi, President and CEO, The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation

Ms. Leah Klaas, Associate Director of Programs, The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation

Mr. Gabriel Rebeck, Japan Programs Manager, Laurasian Institution

Mr. David William Wallis, Professor, Georgetown University

Ms. Jasmine Minato, The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

Mr. Thien Huynh, The Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies

【Location】 Old Residence of the Ambassador of Japan, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America, Washington, D.C.

【Schedule】

■ In-person Alumni Meeting: Oct. 26 (Sat), 2024

1. Opening remarks

【Address】

Mr. Yuki Sugiyama, Second Secretary, Public Affairs, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America

2. 【Presentation】 Presentation by 2 KAKEHASHI Project alumni

Ms. Angel Bryant (FY2022 Inouye Program 3rd Slot)

Ms. Lindsay Michelle Amini (FY2023 Young Researchers the 2nd Slot)

3. 【Presentation】

Presentations by 2 staff members of the Embassy of Japan in the United States of America
“JET Program”

Ms. Devon Altman, Public Affairs, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America
“MEXT Scholarship”

Mr. Karl Tan, Public Affairs, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America

4. 【Commemorative Photo】

5. 【Ice Breaker Session】

6. 【Exchange】 KAKEHASHI alumni networking session

【Facility Tour】 Old residence tour

【Cultural Experience】 Sake tasting, Origami experience

7. Closing remarks

2. Program photos



【Opening Remarks】



【Presentation】



【Ice Breaker Session】



【Exchange】 Participants enjoying the exchange

	
【Facility Tour】 Old residence tour	【Cultural Experience】 Origami experience
	
【Cultural Experience】 Sake tasting	【Commemorative Photo】

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Working Youth (U.S.)

I really enjoyed the speeches on the broad range of topics, including the JET Program, MEXT scholarships, and prior Kakehashi experiences in Japan. I also loved the tour of the residence and the tea ceremony house, and the lovely reception with tea, pastries, and sake tasting. It was also very enjoyable to connect with other Kakehashi alumni at the event and discuss our ongoing connections with Japan.

◆ Working Youth (U.S.)

The Kakehashi program is outstanding as it is a great platform for USA and Japan to strengthen their ironclad relations which is important to make the world better for all of us.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Staff Member of the Embassy of Japan in the United States of America

Overall, I feel that an alumni event such as this is critical to maintaining a pipeline of individuals who may become future partners for diplomacy between Japan and the United States. While many of the participants are all in different fields of work, they all share a common goal of being a part of the Japan-U.S. sphere and to help maintain friendly relations. I hope that we are able to continue hosting this event in the future and providing a space in which these alumni can come together, network, and build upon their shared experiences to inspire a new generation of participants of the Kakehashi Project.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

	
October 26, 2024 (Instagram) Kakehashi Project is about building bridges across nations, cultures, waters...wonderful to reconnect with Kakehashi Alumni in D.C. including the Fletcher School friends!	October 27, 2024 (Facebook) I got to enjoy a nice culture exchange and networking event at the Old Ambassador's Residence and Tea Ceremony house by the Japanese embassy yesterday. We heard interesting stories from Kakehashi (bridge building) alumni who recently returned from Japan after having great experiences with kind homestay families, relaxing hot springs, and delicious sushi. We also heard about opportunities to keep connected with Japan through the JET Program, MEXT Scholarships, Mansfield Fellowship, and other options. The embassy staff then offered a tour of the residence and grounds, and treated us to a reception with sake tasting, tea, and delicious pastries. Thanks to the embassy of Japan and JICE staff for this enjoyable experience!

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)