

JENESYS2024 Singapore-Japan Social Welfare Exchange (Invitation Program for Singaporean High School Students) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】 With a focus on “aging society and declining birthrate,” two high school students (majoring in social welfare) and one chaperone from Singapore visited Japan from December 17 to 24 to learn about Japan's different efforts such as measures for the aging society, early childhood education, measures for Hikikomori (shut-ins), and cutting-edge technologies such as welfare robots. The main objective of the program was to increase the participants' understanding and interest in Japanese technologies and social welfare efforts and to build a network among relevant parties in the field of social welfare.

【Participants】 Total: 3 participants (2 high school students and 1 chaperone from Singapore)

【Locations】 Tokyo 3, Saitama 3, Hokkaido 3

【Schedule】

■ Online Pre-study Program:

Dec. 10 (Tue) **【Lecture on Japan】 “Attractiveness of Japan”**
Lecturer: Mr. ODA Yuichi, Professor, Institute for Excellence in Educational
Innovation (IEEI), Chiba University
【Pre-departure Orientation】
Set Period Prior to Arrival **【Task-based Learning (VOD)】** “Overview/Mission”, “Virtual Home Visit”,
“Message from Minamisanriku”, “Study Japanese Culture in Kyoto”, “Peace Tour
in Hiroshima”, “Learning Japanese”

■ Invitation Program:

Dec. 17 (Tue) Arrival at Narita International Airport
【Post-arrival Orientation】
【Theme Related Lecture & Observation】
【Lecture & Observation】 Silverwing Shintomi (special nursing home)
“Improve the Quality of Care and Reduce the Burden of Staff through Robots
and ICT”
Lecturer: Mr. ISHIKAWA Kimiya, President, Silverwing
Dec. 18 (Wed) **【Theme Related Observation】** CARE SMILE
【Theme Related Lecture】 "Regarding Barrier-Free Policies at the Ministry of
Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism"

Lecturer: Mr. MINEDA Kyohei, Government Officer, Policy Division for Universal Design, Policy Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
【Theme Related Observation】

Santa Fe Garden Hills, Zenkou Research Institute, Inc., Social Welfare Corporation ZENKOUKAI

Dec. 19 (Thu)

Travel from Tokyo to Hokkaido

【Theme Related Lecture】

Introduction of the Local Cafeteria “Manmaru” Project

Lecturer: Mr. TAKAHASHI Masahide

【Cultural Experience】 Zen meditation (Koutoku-Temple)

【Observation】 Night view from Mt. Hakodate

Dec. 20 (Fri)

【Theme Related Observation】 Nursing Care Homes “Hyakurakuen”

【School Exchange】 Iai Girls School

【Meeting with the Host Families】

Dec. 21 (Sat)

【Homestay】

Dec. 22 (Sun)

【Homestay】

【Observation】 Goryokaku Park

Travel from Hokkaido to Tokyo

Dec. 23 (Mon)

【Workshop】 Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)

【Reporting Session】Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans

【Observation】 Asakusa

Dec. 24 (Tue)

Departure from Haneda Airport

2. Program Photos

Online Pre-study Program

	
December 10, 2024 【Lecture on Japan】 “Attractiveness of Japan”	December 10, 2024 【Lecture on Japan】 “Attractiveness of Japan” Group photo

Invitation Program



December 17, 2024 【Lecture & Observation】
Silverwing Shintomi



December 18, 2024 【Theme Related Observation】
CARE SMILE



December 18, 2024 【Theme Related Lecture】
"Regarding Barrier-Free Policies at the Ministry of
Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism"



December 18, 2024 【Theme Related Observation】
Santa Fe Garden Hills



December 19, 2024 【Theme Related Lecture】
"Introduction of the Local Cafeteria "Manmaru"
Project"



December 19, 2024 【Cultural Experience】
Zen meditation (Koutoku-Temple)



December 20, 2024 【Theme Related Observation】
Nursing Care Homes "Hyakurakuen"



December 20, 2024 【School Exchange】
Iai Girls School

	
December 22, 2024 【Homestay】	December 23, 2024【Observation】Goryokaku Park
	
December 23, 2024 【Reporting Session】	December 23, 2024 【Observation】Asakusa

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ High School Student

The Zen meditation experience at the temple was very interesting. The facilities we visited during the program were also wonderful. We got to learn more about the children's cafeteria and how it operates, and we got to see the kitchen and where the children eat their meals. It was truly an enjoyable and enriching experience, and I would definitely like to visit again.

◆ High School Student

The homestay was an amazing experience, and I enjoyed it very much.

My host family was very kind, their home was beautiful, and they took me to so many new places. We went around the town and saw geysers and swans.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ Observation Destination Representative

When we introduced our initiatives to the participants during their visit, they were listening so closely you could tell they were very interested and eager to learn, and we hope we were able to provide something of use to them for their futures.

We regularly welcome visitors from overseas and introduce our initiatives to them, but they are mostly adults. If there were more opportunities to provide knowledge about nursing care and welfare to the younger generation from overseas, like we did in this program, I feel that the growing nursing care problem around the world could be approached differently.

◆ **Lecture**

By sharing our usual activities with people from different cultures, we had an opportunity to take a fresh, objective look at our own activities.

◆ **Exchange School Faculty**

It was a very meaningful international exchange experience for our students, and we would like to thank you again (for the opportunity to be a part of it). We would love to have more opportunities like this in the future.

◆ **Cooperating Organization Representative**

We heard that what the Singaporean students experienced in Japan related to welfare was new to them, and that they considered their time with us to have been very meaningful.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.

 During this day in Tokyo, we visited Silverwing, a care home known for its high-end technology. It features both a daycare center and a nursing home both filled with various robots and devices to aid the older adults there through innovative exercise equipment. One of the devices that stood out were the bed sensors. There were three different types of sensors in Silverwing - one measures weight and pulse, another detects excretion (for diaper changes) and one that can detect moisture. The most fascinating part was the PC, which	
December 18, 2024 (Instagram) High School Student (Singapore) First day in Tokyo. We visited Silverwing, a care home known for its high-end technology. It features both a daycare center and a nursing home both filled with various robots and devices to aid the older adults there through innovative exercise equipment. One of the devices that stood out were the bed sensors. There were three different types of sensors in Silverwing - one measures weight and pulse, another detects excretion (for diaper changes) and one that can detect moisture. The most fascinating part was the PC, which	December 19, 2024 (Instagram) High School Student (Singapore) A second day started off with Care Smile featuring various elder care products. There were all kinds of products ranging from walking assistants to robots and even modified chairs. One of the modified chairs even featured a huge spring supporting one's weight when they get up so that it requires less effort. Next we visited Tokyo academic park where we attended a lecture by MLIT on topics related to the barrier free policy in Japan, which focuses on ensuring that everyone, especially seniors and those with disabilities, are able to live and actively

collates all the data above. It can even track the older adults' sleeping patterns with different colors, and the staff are able to monitor the older adults efficiently and effectively too!

participate in social activities.

Lastly, we visited Santa Fe Garden Hills to visit the Zenkoukai care home. It's another care home that has many devices and robots. Specifically built to support older adults and to help caregivers reducing their workload.

For example, there was a robot that could help lift a senior and transfer them from the bed to wherever they need to be.



December 21, 2024 (Instagram)
High School Student (Singapore)

Third day in Japan and we moved to Hokkaido, visiting Koutoku temple, a Buddhist temple, and attended a lecture conducted by the chief priest. It was an interesting lecture on how they run the temple and the children's cafeteria, "Manmaru", where they serve meals for the local children. We even got to the room in which the meals are provided, which was heated and had various manga and toys for the children to read and play with.

Additionally, we got the chance to experience Zen meditation, led by the priest in the temple. Firstly before we started, we lit incense, then we learnt the steps on clearing our minds to meditate. It was a really unique experience and we gained a lot of insights into the culture of Buddhism in Japan.



January 10, 2024 (Social Welfare Corporation ZENKOUKAI' website)

"Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Japan's Friendship Ties Program JENESYS2024 - Singaporean High School Students learning about social welfare knocked on our doors."

Lastly, to end off the day, we visited Mt. Hakodate which gave us a gorgeous view of the city skyline as well as the ocean which was breathtaking. The ice was slippery and the snow was really cold but all in all it has been a wonderful experience and it was really pretty!

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

Locations: Tokyo, Saitama, Hokkaido – Presentation by 1 group



【Results of the Program】

Tokyo had many high-rise buildings, while Hokkaido had low-rise buildings and many individual houses. Special nursing homes in Tokyo use the latest technology in robotics and equipment to support the elderly and reduce the workload of caregivers (e.g., nursing care equipment to assist with transfers from the bed to a wheelchair, robotics to assist with walking, etc.).

At Hyakurakuen in Hokkaido, we participated in an event focused on mutual exchanges. The local police warned residents about actual cases of bank transfer scams through skits, and the exchange was very lively.

We learned that Zenkoukai's facilities also incorporate the latest technology and that Japan's barrier-free policy contributes to enabling the elderly and persons with disabilities to live independently in society. We also learned about the importance of improving communication skills and cultivating empathy for others by creating a barrier-free mind.

【Action Plan】

We plan to give a presentation in January 2025 to students and staff on campus during lunch about what we learned during the program. We will focus on our what we learned at the special care home for the elderly about social welfare in Japan, but also talk about Zenkokai, barrier-free policies, our exchange program at Iai Girls School and folding origami, the night view from Mt. Hakodate, our fun experience on cold snowy roads, the warmth of our host families during the homestay program, Japanese lifestyles, towns and traditional values, smelt ice fishing, geysers, and details of JENESYS. We will also prepare Japanese snacks and refreshments.

We also plan to use our high school's official Instagram page to share information about Japanese culture and social welfare (care robot technology and policies) to further deepen students' knowledge and understanding.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)