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A FREE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF JAPAN & TEACHERS OF JAPANESE



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There are many things that you will never know until you experienced it. We all have our first times in everything and this summer was my first time in Japan. A first time that I will help me grow as a person. Before going to Japan, everything was much of a blur and I did not know what to expect. In school, I was mostly learning about the language and culture, but

that did not satisfy my growing curiosity in Japan. Luckily, through JET-MIP, I had learned so much in language, culture, communication and sympathy which I will take with me for the rest of my life.

In my very first impression of the program in Japan, I was very amazed by the productivity of the schedule and traveling. When we travel from one place to another, we were really efficient with time. Just by looking at the itinerary, I am able to determine what schedule we have on that day. That helped relieve the nervousness of not knowing what to expect at the beginning of the trip. From the program, I have to say that I have met some of the most amazing people in my life. From the start, where we heard about Taylor Anderson and Montgomery Dickson's story, I was greatly moved by their passion in what they did. Even if I have never met them, I can interpret through videos, families and friends. They were inspiring people who have left legacies here on earth.

Then, I got to communicate with the other participants who also got selected for this program. To be honest, from the very beginning, I didn't think I would build such a strong bond with them. I doubted myself and I doubted them. After a few days of getting to know my peers:

found out that we have a lot in common. Especially, the interest in Japanese language and culture. I get to hear some of their stories and culture back home and I shared some of mine. By communicating with each other, I can see the different spectrum of life in each person. Through this program, I am really glad to say that I made bunch of wonderful lifelong friends.

I also got to know some of the Japanese students who were affected by Tohoku tsunami and earthquake. It was much awkward at first because we were not sure what to chat about and I was shy to use my Japanese. However, as time passed I got used to talking in Japanese and we had quite a conversation. What bothered me was that we did not get to talk about their experience during and after the disaster. I wished I have conversed more on that. I was expecting to know more about the disaster and how I can help. Although time was short, I learned a lot of Japanese, communicating skills, and realizing how to care.

Going to Japan and going as a scholarship was something I never thought would happen until I got selected for this program. At first, I thought I would learn Japanese because of the beauty of their art and their anime or manga, however after the trip, I have a different perspective. Now, I would think of how I would continue my Japanese career in the future. When we went to Miyagi for the JET ALT and CIR exchange, I was listening attentively because it sounds like something that I would want to do. Their experience helped increase my passion to learn more about Japan. All these experiences also inspired me to study or work abroad in Japan later in life. I personally do think that the JET program is an option in the future. It was sad to hear that this is the last year of JET-MIP and as a former participant of this program, I really wish that there is another alternative for this program. That way, more people are able to help build the bridge between Japan and America.

There was a start and there was an end to the program. It was a really emotionally scene when we had to say our farewells to each other. We cried and we laughed, but we did not stop staying in contact with each other. When I arrived back home, I immediately shared all my experiences on the trip. While I unpacked my luggage, I explained each item that I got in Japan to my parents. I shared my first day of the program, where I went, what people I met, my homestay and all the way to the very last day of the trip. My parents were so glad that I enjoyed the trip and they were proud of me for taking good care of myself. It was the first time for I to travelled for such a long distance by myself. They were worried at first, but when I came back, they were happy that I have gained new experiences. I then told my community center. Everyone was asking me about the trip and so I had this long story telling session with them. I was surprised to see how many people listened to me. By telling them my experience, they told me that they also want to go to Japan someday and also possibly learn Japanese. I was glad that I made a positive influence for them to also love Japan and its culture.

Lastly, I want to make a short message to both ALTs Taylor Anderson and Montgomery Dickson. I just want to say that even if your time here on earth is short, I believe you have made a huge impact in each students' lives in Ishinomaki and Rikuzentakata. Not only that but you have made a huge impact on us, American exchange students. If it was not for you, JET-MIP w not exist. And if it was not for you, we would not have this opportunity to have exchange

between Japan and America. You were the bridges for these two countries, and we, JET-MIPpers, will continue to build on your legacies after the program. It was inspiring that you pursued what you are passionate about and it inspired me to also do the same. So, I just want to say a "Thank You" for all your hard work and what you have left behind.

NIPPON THROUGH MY EYES PHOTO SUBMISSION



“Knowing the beauty of the countryside”

As a resident of the urban areas, I barely get to see that much greens. The countryside gave me calmness and positive energy.

Breeze #110



Breeze #109



Breeze #108

Breeze #107



Breeze #106



Breeze #105



Breeze #104



Breeze #103



Breeze #102



Japanese Language Education Update 29

2015 JET-MIP Essay: Fei Zhao

2015 JET-MIP Essay: Mackenzie Young

2015 JET-MIP Essay: Bailey Well

2015 JET-MIP Essay: Christopher Wynn

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Breeze #99



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