



NOVEMBER, 2016: BREEZE ISSUE #109

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



2016 SHORT-TERM TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM BY KRISTIN WINGATE

*Cranford Public Schools
Cranford, NJ*

My participation in the Japan Foundation Short-Term Teacher Training Program was an unforgettable experience. Through our 8 week program, I met 53 Japanese language teachers from 27 unique countries. In a short amount of time, we became an international family that connected with one another through the country and culture that we love. Together, we were fortunate enough to partake in a variety of hands-on experiences in the country we have all devoted our lives to studying.

Our summer program at the Japan Foundation focused on three main pillars: Japanese language, Japanese teaching methodology, and Japanese culture. Our Japanese language courses were geared toward perfecting our already strong linguistic abilities. Classes met every day and focused on a variety of topics ranging from travel, the workplace, and the difference in our own cultures compared to Japan. We strengthened our oratory skills through independent speeches and presentations, while constantly self-reflecting and reexamining our work.

As for Japanese culture, this was the most extensive of the three focal points at the Japan Foundation's program. I was amazed at how many opportunities the staff and teachers at the Japan Foundation created for us to deepen our cultural knowledge. We were given the opportunity to partake in a multitude of cultural workshops such as picture storytelling, calligraphy, tea ceremony, and yukata fitting. The Japan Foundation arranged for our program to attend [Privacy](#) - [Terms](#)

kabuki play, as well as a day visit to a local school in our prefecture. We discussed a variety of topics with both the high school students and teachers at Tokorozawa High School and viewed student extra-curricular life. When I thanked our head program coordinator, Mrs. Haruko Arai, for planning our school visit, she informed me that last year's summer program was unable to attend, so I felt especially fortunate to be able to go to Tokorozawa High School with this year's participants.

One memory that truly stands out from the rest of the program is the homestay experience. Although optional, I decided from the beginning of the application process that I would absolutely participate. I think a unique and rare experience such as staying with a host family is a very important one for a non-native speaker of Japanese. Even though it was only for one weekend, I learned so much in terms of Japanese language and culture from my generous host family. My host mother and host father and I chatted about the differences between Japan and the US, discussed difficulties in Japanese and English linguistics, and ate the best home-cooked Japanese cuisine together. In terms of homestays, this counts as my second as I stayed with a host family for one month in Kyoto. But each household and family brings their own history and personal customs that help their guest better understand everyday Japanese culture. Both separate but similar experiences have helped shaped me into the instructor I am today.

Lastly, our Japanese teaching methodology courses focused on honing our current teaching experience and skills into a more communicative approach according to the Japan Foundation Standards. Our final project entailed creating classroom activities or games from what we learned during our coursework, then showcasing our ideas via group presentations. Ultimately, we were to create materials that we could use once we returned to our respective countries. After viewing my colleagues' presentations, I was not only able to see different teaching styles and methods, but I have come back to my own school district full of ideas for my own Japanese language classroom to help my own students in their linguistic studies.



On the day of our closing ceremony at the Japan Foundation, we all gathered to celebrate our accomplishments in completing our program and to receive our certificates of completion. At the following farewell party, our Japan Foundation teachers and staff, host families, and Japanese program volunteers toasted to everyone's hard work this summer and bid us safe travels to our respective home countries. I watched in awe as our colleagues sang songs and performed traditional dances from their homeland for entertainment for the banquet. I

reflected on how much we can share with one another about our own cultures while studying a common one. The realm of Japanese studies is small, and I can only hope to meet the friends I have made here once again in the world.

Breeze #110



Breeze #109



Japanese Language Education Update 36

2016 J-LEAP Report: Akiko Inagaki

2016 J-LEAP Report: Sakurako Hiroike

2016 Short-Term Teacher Training Program: Kristin Wingate

2016 Short-Term Teacher Training Program: Madeleine Graham

2016 Japanese Language Program for Specialists: Lin Li

2016 Japanese Language Program for Specialists: Samuel Timinsky

Breeze #108



Breeze #107



Breeze #106



Breeze #105



Breeze #104



Breeze #103



Breeze #102

Breeze #101



Breeze #100



Breeze #99



[Headquarters](#) [New York Office](#) [Center for Global Partnership](#) [Volunteer](#)
[ボランティア募集](#) [Japan Related Links](#) [Job Openings \(Updated\)](#)

5700 Wilshire blvd, Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA 90036
P. 323.761.7510

Annual Report

© 2019 The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

Web Design.