

## **Visit Schools in Japan      Ruchi Shetti**

Schooling in Japan is completely different than America. After going to 3 different types of schools, we were able to distinctly tell the characteristics similar and different to the education we have. The first school we visited was called Ichikashi High School, known for their award winning brass band. It was amazing to see how hard each club worked, and how much it paid off. Each student had a uniform, and after talking to English speaking students, we learned much more about the lifestyle they have.

The second and third schools we visited were Daichi Elementary and Nippon Sports Science School. Even at Daichi Elementary School, the kids were extremely disciplined and performed a show for us as well. Different uniforms were worn to differentiate grades. One thing that was extremely different than American schooling was lunchtime. The sixth grade students served us lunch by themselves, with no aid from a lunch lady like we have. The science and sports school we attended focused more on athletics than education, and that's where we learned karate as well. The sports that were focused on that school included ones that are not common in our district, like badminton, ping pong, and karate. The students clearly worked hard to get in the positions they were in, like practicing for 3 hours every day without fail.

Japanese students are hardworking, disciplined, and determined, but seeing that we got along so quickly comparing all our similarities and differences. It was definitely an amazing experience, and the entire Student Delegation wishes to visit again.

## **Experience Japanese Culture      Daniel Diederich**

As the 45th Group Of Torrance Delegates, we were able to enjoy a cultural excursion in which we were able to learn and experience two distinct cultural practices: Sado, a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, and the Koto, a difficult instrument consisting of strings.

Experiencing the Sado ceremony firsthand was amazing. Learning about the preparations and the certain ways to make and eat green tea was very interesting to say the least. We went into the traditional building for the ceremony, through a small opening. We ate special Japanese sweets made from bean paste before the tea as well, and watched the tea be masterfully made. We all very much enjoyed being a part of this ceremony and learned many new and interesting things.

Next, we were allowed to listen to a performance of the Koto, a traditional Japanese instrument. The two performers played traditional Koto songs that blended beautifully

together. Learning about the origins of the Koto and what it represents was very intriguing to us all. We were then able to play the Koto ourselves. Although we played a basic song, it was very fun and made us want to continue to learn more.

I can speak for all the delegates when I say that we really enjoyed taking part in both of these culturally iconic practices. It was definitely a great experience and all of the delegates would love to come back to Japan.

### **Tokyo Tour    Andrew Kang**

The Tokyo Tour was an amazing opportunity for us Torrance Delegates to experience and see the culture of Japan. We started off our eventful day by touring around Asakusa and visiting a unique location that offered a variety of amazing Japanese food samples for visitors to view or purchase. After drifting around the store, we were taken up to the second floor for a special experience of learning the art of creating food samples: tempura and lettuce. It was a lot of fun, and we watched with awe as we saw with how much ease the masters were able to complete the task. We were all pleasantly surprised by how well our food samples actually turned out. Following this, we walked to a small Italian restaurant where we had a delicious lunch and a view of the city life around. After enjoying the food and each other's company, the tour continued on to the Kaminarimon Gate, where we explored the endless lines of shops littering the sides of the streets and the temple beyond. Although temperatures reached around 96 degrees Fahrenheit, we were still able to enjoy walking through the shaded streets, going in and out of the small shops. We then took a short train to the area of the Tokyo Sky Tree, where we got a great view of it from the tall building adjacent to it. We then took advantage of the cool environment inside the building to take a quick ice cream break and continue shopping. We also found out that the mascots of the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics had been announced a couple days before, and that they were having an event to celebrate it directly outside the building we were in. Many of us took this great opportunity to grab some Olympics gear while prices were right. After being in the hot sun all day, we finally took the train back to Kashiwa, arriving around 17:30, and returned home to our host families to enjoy the rest of the evening. This little trip was an overall great learning and relaxing experience for all the students, and although we all had to suffer from the extreme temperatures, we thoroughly enjoyed our adventures today in Tokyo.

### **Hiroshima Tour    Tejas Lolge**

The 2018 TSCA Delegation going to Hiroshima was an extremely unique experience. Knowing that many people who live in Japan haven't even visited the recently developed city, we students felt very privileged to have this opportunity.

The Miyajima "Floating Temple" was a rare and beautiful sight. We were able to see the shrine in high tide, when the bottom was completely submerged in seawater, and had the opportunity to walk along the 'boardwalk' like shrine.

Later that night we had a special type of Japanese food called Okonomiyaki, or Hiroshimayaki, which consisted of cabbage, egg, noodles, seafood, and other various toppings. Trying this unique recipe was a once in a lifetime opportunity, since it is specialized in the city of Hiroshima.

For the main part of Hiroshima, reliving the history of the infamous atomic bomb dropping, the Atomic Bomb Museum is something that will forever be in the delegates' memories. It being such a gloomy and solemn setting, none of us felt right while smiling during a picture. That being said, hearing the story of Sadako Sasaki brought many of us to tears, along with witnessing the gruesome physical effects people encountered.

Although Hiroshima experienced one of the worlds greatest tragedies, it was easy to see that the city did not let its past affect the future. Beautifully lit up during the nighttime, seeing the development of a city that was once under ash was extraordinary. The 2018 TSCA Delegates definitely recommend seeing the astonishing town, and definitely want to visit again.

### **Kyoto Trip    Marie Shimizu**

Our one day excursion out to Kyoto granted us the perfect opportunity to explore various parts of the great Japan and experience its culture. After taking the Shinkansen from Hiroshima to Kyoto, we were welcomed by another grand hotel, Kyoto Shin-Hankyu Hotel. After finally getting used to the comfort of the air-conditioned hotel, we were once again brought outside to the heat of the Japanese summer. We first were taken to visit the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine, otherwise known for its thousands of red gates. We were given time to explore and wander through the endless overhanging gates, taking the opportunity to take pictures wherever possible. It was an amazing once in a lifetime experience that everyone should try to do. We then left for Kiyomizu Temple, which required a long walk through the narrow streets and up the mountain. Although we were all exhausted by the time we reached the temple, the views made it completely worth it. Inside the temple, we overlooked an endless forest of luscious green trees weaving their way down the side of the mountain. Tall pagodas surrounded the pathway up to the top, and the area was crowded with tourists anxious to explore. As we

departed and were slowly making our way back, we were able to explore the many shops that lined the main street back down. For dinner, we went to an Italian restaurant called Kamakura Pasta, where we enjoyed a relaxing lunch. The next day, we left in the morning from the hotel for Kinkaku-ji temple. It was an amazing view of the golden temple in the middle of the great pond, and it was definitely a place worth visiting. Next, at the Nijo-jo Castle, we were able to walk on the “creaking floors” through one section of the great walled castle and see first hand what would have occurred in the castle back in the day. We were then given free time to explore the rest of the castle and its surrounding areas, including the grand entrances and the moat. After the castle, we made our way to a local Kyoto bakery for a quick lunch before leaving to the train station back to Kashiwa. This amazing trip provided the opportunity to travel back in time to the historical sites of Japan as we were all able to appreciate the knowledge we gained from our experiences in Kyoto. It was amazing to see so many different landmarks on this trip and I can't wait to bring all my memories and knowledge back to Torrance