



OCA REPORT

September 2017

MAY 2017 THAI STUDENT JAPAN TOUR

**Prof. Kaniittha from Chulalongkorn University**

Nice to meet you. I am Kaniittha Tambuntertchai. Please call me Kaniittha. I have completed my doctoral course at the Univ. of Cambridge in the UK and have been teaching "environmental economics" at Chulalongkorn (Chula) Univ. since 5 years ago. This is the first time I participated in OCA's Japan training program. This year, 12 students from Chula Univ., Prof. Sirima and I, totally 14 participated for 10 days from Wednesday, May 24, 2017 to Friday, June 2 (Friday). In Tokyo, Prof. Piti who had participated in the OCA program 15 years ago also joined.

Osaka

The party arrived at Osaka Airport on 24th May. This is the first time Osaka Univ. students were in charge of receiving us in Osaka. Osaka Univ. was the graduate school attended by

the Chula Univ. Economics Dean who asked Prof. Gotoh of Osaka Univ. for the reception.

We arrived in Japan early Monday morning and we took a tour of the Osaka Mint Bureau. For dinner we went to a sushi restaurant which we wanted to go to at least once, "It must be sushi if we go to Japan." We stacked up dishes again and again until I did not know how many dishes I ate.

On the 25th, we received a special lecture by Prof. Erika Seki at the Faculty of Economics, Osaka Univ. "7 Dimensions of Development and Quality of Life". The lecture of development economics, which involved a bit of game elements, was very interesting and the students were also listening with great interest. In the afternoon, six Osaka Univ. students took us on a tour of Osaka. View, who had participated in the OCA program, is now studying at Osaka Univ. she joined and enjoyed interacting with students while hanging out at Osaka Castle and downtown and having dinner with the Osaka Univ. students.

On the 26th we did a "Kyoto bus tour guided by Osaka Univ. students". Many of the Osaka Univ. students who participated this time had been abroad and there was no problem with English conversation at all. We visited Kinkakuji and wandered around Kiyomizudera and Arashiyama. Women in kimono were everywhere in the city. It was wonderful to see so many! When I asked later, I was told most were tourists who came

from China and Korea. I heard that, to my surprise, there was a program to watch kimono in the city. We went back to Osaka and enjoyed a loud noisy dinner at an okonomiyaki restaurant with Osaka Univ. students.

Nakatsugawa

This is the 4th year for our homestay in Nakatsugawa. The students are always looking forward to the homestay in Nakatsugawa. We went there via Nagoya by Shinkansen bullet train and visited OCA Mori-san's house. His house is the American style fancy house on a wide hill, and host families and neighbors gathered in the hill garden to greet the students. There were several tents in the garden where there were all kinds of foods made by each host family. The students had lunch with the host families and chatted and played with the little children. It was a peaceful Welcome Party. In the area around Nakatsugawa there is the Ena Valley where the Kiso River flows, and the students descended down the river and stayed with an old farmer and enjoyed Japanese family life for 2 nights & 3 days. Thank you very much for accepting us in Nakatsugawa.



Tokyo

We went to Tokyo via Shinkansen on Monday, 29th. Chanon and Tanan from Chula, who had taken part in the OCA program many times came to Tokyo Station. We visited the Faculty of Economics at Waseda Univ. where some students are currently studying abroad, and Prof. Todo and his students welcomed us. The buildings of Waseda Univ. are wonderful in fusion of the old and new.

On the 30th we headed for Saitama Univ. by bus where Prof. Kittu, Ploy, and Mesa and all of the Nagashima seminar students who had participated in OCA program at Chula Univ. greeted us. Their students and the Thai students exchanged ideas on "Student life in Japan and Thailand" and discussed the environment of student life with each other. In the afternoon we took a bus tour "Saitama Univ. student's guide to Kawagoe

sightseeing". Dinner was all-you-can-eat at an Izakaya restaurant with Saitama Univ. students, which is an annual event, until late at night.

On the 31st we went to Kamakura by bus to visit Tsuruoka Hachiman Shrine, and then took an Enoden train and visited the Great Buddha. There were 13 students from Saitama Univ. and Chuo Univ. attending this bus tour and they enjoyed chatting on the bus. We enjoyed Chinese cuisine at China town in Yokohama.



We visited Chuo Univ. on June 1st and received a special lecture from Prof. Hasegawa titled "Changing Regional Economic Connectivity in ASEAN and Japan". In the afternoon Chuo Univ. students guided us and we strolled around Shibuya and Harajuku and enjoyed the last shopping in Japan. On the 2nd, we headed for Bangkok via Hong Kong on a morning flight. The ten days like a dream passed very quickly but a lot of wonderful memories remained.

Thank you for your cooperation!

It was a wonderful Japan visit. We are really thankful to you for accepting us. We made the exchange program with a total of 44 students from Osaka Univ., Waseda Univ., Saitama Univ., Chuo Univ. In Nakatsugawa we became familiar with 12 host families. Some host families said that some Thai students contacted them every year and some students even came to see the families in Nakatsugawa. Then, Thai students who participated in the OCA program studied a lot in Japan. No wonder this program was lasted over 45 years. I'm really thankful to you all.



"Home stay in Nakatsugawa" by Mr. Okada

My name is Okada. I was in charge of the homestay in Nakatsugawa. Every year we provide homestays for Thai students at this period. This year we also accepted 12 students in 12 families and enjoyed a 2 night 3 day homestay. Since I received a nice messages from the host families who accepted Thai students, I would like to introduce them.



Yoko Ito (Third time of acceptance)

We talk a lot about Pias what she is doing. A few days with a gentle, smiling, and very beautiful Pias was a "tun tent tun tent (exciting)" time for us. Thank you for making Thai food for dinner! It was exciting and tasty for both adults and children ...^o^.

She looked so sad that we might not be able to visit Thailand. But I believe we can visit her. Our family support Pias's dream. See you again soon.

Hazuki Terasawa (First time of acceptance)

Gong- chan who came to our house greeted us courteously and asked various questions to communicate with us. Although I was worried about the language barrier, I was glad that she was trying hard to understand us even with our poor English.

Although we could not take her out to special places, Gong- chan seemed to enjoy casual Japanese life saying "everything is so special." In the morning of the parting day, we were so sad. We got along very well regardless of nationality and gender and it was a really valuable experience. Thank you Gong-chan.

Mika Ito (First time of acceptance)

This is my impression, "We tried it and we've done and it was fun." The experience of being a host family was a wonderful thing that I can't express in words.

Mi-kun came to my house, and I was worried about communicating in English and if we could welcome him well enough. But we used all kinds of tools and enjoyed together with laughter and tears. Our children's (12 years old and 5 years old) eyes were shining when they could communicate with Mi-kun. When my nephew - a high school student - asked him about the next school career choice, Mi-kun gave him honest advice. They talked with each other about their dreams, and I was moved to tears. It was a valuable experience that remains in my mind like God's gift. Thank you very much.



Thai students who participated in the project

We asked the Thai students who took part in this tour on the last day of the project. Let us present some of their comments.

PING

I am very happy to visit Japan and I am thankful to everyone who took charge of us. The sushi and Okonomiyaki which we ate in Osaka. An Izakaya restaurant we went with Saitama Univ. students. Home cooked meals in Nakatsugawa. Everything was so delicious! Ah I only talked about the meals (^o^), but the dishes we ate with students from Osaka Univ., Waseda Univ., Saitama Univ., Chuo Univ. were really tasty and we had a great time. It was an unforgettable time to spend with them. I wish we could have stayed a little longer.

PIAS

I am truly grateful to all Japanese students and I am sure that the last ten days will be a life time memory. I hope to learn more about Japan and if possible have a longer program like 2 or 3 weeks.

MI

It may not be possible because of the university exchange program, but I hope we can have more free time. However, meals, programs and conversations with students and my host family were so wonderful. Thank you very much.

TAR

This trip was my first overseas trip, so I was a little worried. But the Thai students and Japanese students who joined the trip were very kind and I was relieved. The host family was so good that I had a great journey that I had never experienced before.

IM

"It was my first time to participate in such a wonderful trip, and I didn't want to return to Bangkok !! I am thankful to all the OCA folks who organized this trip. In the future if there is anything that I can do to help, I will do anything. So please call me!

Lastly, the comments from Prof. Sirima:

It was a wonderful program and I would like to continue this exchange program every year. The next time I think it would be better to decide a theme between Japan and Thai students before leaving for Japan. Then we could have a good discussion about the theme in Japan. For example, the topic could be environmental problems after economic development.



We always ask Thai students who participated at the end of the program to evaluate the contents. Here are the results: The top five programs were outstanding as follows:

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|---------|
| 1st: | Home stay and garden party at Nakatsugawa | 5.00 pt |
| 2 nd : | Osaka city tour with Osaka Univ. students | 4.86 pt |
| 3 rd : | Izakaya dinner with Saitama Univ. students: | 4.82 pt |
| 4 th : | Okonomiyaki with Osaka Univ. students | 4.64 pt |
| 5 th : | Special lecture by Prof. Seki from Osaka Univ. | 4.50 pt |

Thank you very much for your cooperation. Thai students who participated enjoyed ten days like a dream and returned home safely. I think that this program will create lifelong memories. We would like to continue this Japanese training program of Chulalongkorn Univ. students with your support.

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