

6. Kochi Prefecture

Date	Time	Activities
Oct. 10 (Thu)	8:15/8:30	Assemble/Depart Hotel Mystays Premier Narita
	11:25	Depart from Haneda Airport (ANA563)
	12:50	Arrive at KOCHI RYOMA Airport
	13:40-14:30	Lunch at restaurant GOODRUCK
	14:50	Godaisan observatory
	16:00	Arrive at hotel / check in
	17:30-	Dinner
Oct. 11 (Fri)	9:00	Depart from hotel
		Visit Kochi Castle Museum of History & Kochi Castle
	11:40-	Lunch at Kochi PALACE HOTEL
	13:40	Visit Kochi YOSAKOI Information Center
		Arrive at hotel
	16:00-16:30	Courtesy Call on Kochi Prefecture
		* Welcome speech by the Deputy Director General of Department of Culture, community and sports for Kochi Prefecture, Mr. Takahashi Shinichi
		* Speech by the delegation leader of United Mexican States
		* Gift Exchange, Photo Session
17:30-	Dinner	
Oct. 12 (Sat)	9:00	Depart from hotel (by bus) / check out
	9:30-14:30	National lodging KATSURAHAMA-SO (exchanging meeting with regional youth)
	15:00-16:00	The Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum
		Arrive at hotel
		Welcome Reception/ Homestay Matching
		* Welcome speech by the President of Kochi International Youth Exchange Organization,
		* Speech by the delegation leader of Republic of the Philippines
		* Toast by the host family representative
Oct. 13 (Sun)		Homestay
Oct. 14 (Mon)	8:30	Assemble at The Crown Palais New Hankyu Kochi from homestay
	9:00	Depart from hotel

This is the first time that Kochi Prefecture has accepted the Homestay Program for International Youth Development Exchange Program. In the last two years, we have participated in the training camp program, so this time I think I have grasped the whole structure of what kind of experience the participating overseas youths are going to have at the regional program.

In recent years, the homestay exchange program has not been so active among Kochi Prefecture's IYEO activities, while the youth exchange program has been very active. However, it turned out that the host families that have applied for the present program are such a wonderful global citizen having a long history and commitment to international exchange, including the United Mexican States and the Republic of the Philippines. I felt as if the host family and the overseas youth had been connected by an invisible green thread. We have been engaged in international exchange activities for 30 years, but

once again we realized the deep meaning of homestay programs, and from now on, we want to actively challenge homestay programs more than ever.

There was also exchange with local youths in Kochi. I hope the participating youths enjoyed the exchange at Katsurahama-so, where you can take a bird's-eye view of the Pacific Ocean, strolling around Katsurahama, and visiting the Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum. The youths also visited the Kochi Castle Museum of History, the Kochi Castle and learned the culture and history of Kochi at Kochi Yosakoi Information Community Square.

Lastly, I still remember the smile of the overseas youth on the bus to Okayama when we sent them off with the host families and local youths. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the host families, the local youths, Kochi Prefecture, and all the people concerned, and I look forward to the day when I can meet you again. Thank you very much.



Host Family

We have welcomed friends from all over the world before, including some vegetarians. But this time we were very anxious about how far we could do because we were going to accept a vegan for the first time.

However, on the first day when we met a charming Mexican lady, Lolha, we realized that it was an imaginary fear, and my anxiety was completely resolved. She was not a religious or ideological vegan, but simply because she was unable to consume animal food because of her allergic constitution.

We started to develop an action plan quickly because she would stay only for 2 days. It used to be such a tough task to have the overseas youth confirm what they could eat and could not eat at a supermarket. Now we are living in a digital world.

We used the internet to select what Lolha could eat, and also showed her the photos and video of historic sites or scenic spots that we could go from my home, and asked her where she would like to go.

She was also fluent in English and was able to communicate easily. The next day, we drove to Ashizuri Cape with my wife and two sons, then to the chinka-bashi bridges of Shimanto River, bridges without parapets that sink underwater when the water level rises. Thanks to her, we could have a valuable time to experience different cultures while in Japan. I will stop being shy and continue to actively challenge cross-cultural experiences.

On the day she left, she promised that she would definitely bring her father, who thinks he can't go to Japan because he can't speak English well.

Muchisimas Gracias, Loly!!

Overseas Participant, Philippine Delegation

If the International Youth Conference held in Narita City reminded us of our global citizenship and our shared responsibility to make the world a better place, the Regional Programs allowed us to immerse ourselves in the 'bigger world' and to learn more about how we can contribute for the betterment of the world.

In Kochi, we had the chance to have a closer look of the 'bigger world' and to learn more about a culture beyond our own. We learned to embrace diversity and see it not as a barrier but as an opportunity to learn and to exchange insights, ideas and good practices.

The Kochi program allowed us to learn more about the Japanese history, heritage and culture. The learning trips and discussions, and even the unstructured free times, allowed us not only to enjoy the calming beauty of the prefecture but also to join

with the community and to be part of its people's lives- to walk and to eat with them, to share stories and to exchange ideas, and to sing and to dance with them.

The activities in Kochi allowed us to learn a lot about Japan but we learned so much more during our brief homestay. Living with our host families was a one-of-a-kind experience that allowed us to have a closer look to the lives of the Japanese people and a deeper understanding of their culture and society. More importantly, it allowed us to experience the warmth and hospitality of the Japanese people in a very personal. The homestay made us feel that we have a family far away from home. It may be a short stay but a meaningful immersion, nonetheless. It was a heartwarming experience that we will always be grateful about.

Overseas Participant, Mexico Delegation

On October 10th, the Mexican Delegation went by airplane to Kochi's prefecture being and were received by representants of the IYEO (International Youth Exchange Organization) who took us by bus to Nankoku-shi Myoken to have lunch in a restaurant where we ate bento box and we were transferred to the "Godaisan Park" where we were amazed for the beautiful landscape of Kochi from the top. Then we arrived at "The Crown Palais Hotel" where we stayed and went out to meet anime and convenience stores and had dinner outside trying typical food like "Takoyaki" and "Yakitori."

On October 11th, we went to the "Kochi Castle Museum of History," where we appreciated some historical pieces from Japan, we also visited the "Kochi Castle" with a beautiful garden and view from the top, learning about architecture and ancient culture and then we had lunch in the "Buffet Restaurant Ezu" eating an excellent variety of typical foods. Also, we went to the "Kochi Yosakoi Information Community Square" where we were taught to dance "Yosakoi." We

returned to the hotel where we had a Courtesy call by the Deputy Director General of Department of Culture, community and sports for Kochi Prefecture, Mr. Takahashi Shichini, being welcome by a comfortable speech about support and we were called members of the Kochi Family exchanging several gifts. Also, we had dinner on streets of Kochi, trying delicious ramen and enjoying a beautiful sunset composed by the clouds of the Hagibis typhoon.

On October 12, we were taken to the "Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum," exchanging ideas with local youth and having lunch; then we visited the "Katsurahama Beach." At night we attended a speech given by the President of Kochi International Youth Exchange Organization (IYEO), Mr. Maeda Masaya who gave us a welcome speech for the two delegations, also we met our Homestay family and having dinner with them, we also went each to their respective homes. We are very happy for this experience, we own Japan a lot for this opportunity.



7. Okayama Prefecture

Date	Time	Activities
Oct.14 (Mon)	9:00 14:00- 15:00-17:30	Depart from hotel Orientation SDGs card game Welcome Reception * Welcome speech by the President of Okayama International Youth Exchange Organization * Speech by the delegation leader of United Mexican States * Toast by Okayama side * Cultural Performance by the participants
Oct.15 (Tue)	9:30-11:30	Keynote speech by Vice President of Okayama University
	11:30-14:30	Okayama city tour
	15:30-16:00	Courtesy Call on Okayama Prefecture * Welcome speech by Vice-Governor of Okayama Prefecture, Mr. Kikuchi Yoshinobu * Speech by the delegation leader of Republic of the Philippines * Self-introduction by participating youth / Gift exchange / Photo session
	16:30	Arrive at hotel
	18:00-	Dinner
Oct.16 (Wed)	8:00	Depart from hotel
	9:30-12:00	Kojima City civic center lecture by E.C OCEANS
	12:30	KURASHIKI KOJIMA SETOUCHI HOTEL
	14:30-17:00	Visit Kurashiki Bikian Historical Area
	17:30-	Dinner in Kurashiki city
	20:00	Arrive at hotel
Oct.17 (Thu)	8:20	Depart from hotel
	9:00-13:00	Cultural exchange at Okayama University of Science High School
	14:00-16:00	Keynote speech by APDA, G20 ministry of health in Okayama prefecture, commemorative meeting seminar [SDGs and Healthy life expectancy] at Shikada campus, Okayama University
	16:00-17:30	Discussion
	18:00-	Dinner party * Speech by the representatives from each delegation
Oct. 18 (Fri)	10:00	Check out
	12:00	Assemble at Okayama station
	13:28	Depart from Okayama station
	16:53	Arrive at Tokyo Station
	17:40	Arrive at Hotel Le Port Kojimachi / check in

This year, we had an intense 5-day program, with “SDGs × Water” set as a goal, including a lecture by a company that tackles water issues from Okayama, SDGs card games, and lectures on SDGs, in which we were so immersed in SDGs and shared awareness and learning with participating youths from the Republic of the Philippines and the United Mexican States.

Prof. Yokoi from Okayama University talked about the SDGs issues and the latest movements in the world. There was also a topic about the damage of Typhoon Hagibis and the heavy rain in West Japan (Kurashiki), which appealed to the audience why the world needs to work together.

After that, while walking around Korakuen Garden, we encountered a situation where a group of students was picking up trash, and every one of us said, “It’s an SDGs initiative!” We also saw lots of MOMO charis (Okayama City Community Cycle). A Filipino youth was paying attention to it and said “it is eco-friendly”.

Every day, we had time to look back. We discussed

what could be done from the viewpoint of youth through the SDGs initiative and how it is done in their home countries. When I talked about a building in Naoshima in the Inland Sea that preserves the environment by using natural wind and natural light without using air-conditioners or lights, each one of the group member was very eager to listen to me. Each group discussed and gave presentation till the end of time available, and it was a very exciting time.

“What can we do to save the planet as a young generation?”

This is the question I was repeatedly asked for 5 days.

Some of the youths were aware of their own water and trash problems, but were unable to come up with a separation or solution. However, during the time to look back on the last day, there was a declaration of action plans about what each person can do, such as “going out with My Eco Bags and My Bottles” and “thorough recycling.” I was very happy that everyone started to take the SDGs as their own.



Local Youth

I participated in a program held in Okayama Prefecture. I was very impressed when I participated in the SDGs card game. I had never played so far, so I was very excited about what it would be like to play a card game with overseas youths.

However, when it started, everyone was absorbed in the game like a child and running to try to clear their goals. It might be a prejudice that Japanese people including me are very shy on a public occasion, but I was surprised to see many Japanese participants were very active. Inspired by them, I was able to

work actively and it was such a fulfilling time.

I participated with a baby of mine, but overseas youths came to me and hold my baby so skillfully with a practiced hand and sing a song for the baby. Their smiles made us so happy, and it was really good to share such a fun time despite my poor English skills.

Then, in a group discussion, we also had a good time discussing the problems of each country and I hope the discussion would be of any help to them after they return to their home country.

Overseas Participant, Philippine Delegation

After having a deeper understanding of our global citizenship through our interaction, exchange and stay with the Japanese people, we moved to Okayama and learned more about our role in global development. We learned about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, with the emphasis on balancing the economic, societal and environmental gains. We also realized that genuine development entails inclusivity- a development where no one is left behind.

The Okayama program highlighted the participatory approach of the SDGs and the value of engaging all stakeholders in making relevant and innovative solutions for our local and global concerns. Our interactive activities, lectures and interaction with the locals from different sectors- government, academe, business, civil society and youth- provided us models in localizing the SDGs, and example of a

community that co-owns the problem and co-creates solutions. The people of Okayama inspired us and reminded us of our piece of the puzzle- our role as youth in achieving inclusive and sustainable development. More importantly, they motivated us take action towards the achievement of the goals, and empowered us that we all can make a difference.

Indeed, the INDEX 2019, particularly the Regional Program, was an exciting and empowering journey that challenges us to learn more and to do more towards making this world a better place for everyone. In closing, I would like to express, in behalf of the Philippine delegation, my sincerest gratitude to the Japanese Government who believed in our capacity as young leaders, and to all the staff, facilitators, local youth and partners who guided and helped us patiently in all our activities.

October 14th, The Mexican delegation was very enthusiastic to know Okayama, famous for its white peaches and delicious grapes.

This part of the program gave us an opportunity to learn about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) while we played making the class more effective learning how to work with the challenges in our communities. All this thanks to the great master who told us how to be leaders enhancing the power of youth.

For October the 15th the day began with a magnificent presentation by Mr. Yokoi Atsufumi entitled "SDG's: Well-being for 'all on the earth'". We understood that we must take de 2030 to our communities and learn about how the other countries are managing this topic. In the reflection time also we opened our eyes to see the ways to be congruent with our words and actions.

In the next day, October 16th, the young delegates had sessions with experts who combines science with activism. He shared with us his innovative project and what makes it so special, that is the fact that it is sustainable and eco-friendly.

We also had an inspiring talk with someone who has dedicated 25 years of his life to cleaning the beaches of Japan, seeking to reduce garbage and

strengthening the culture of responsible consumption. He began to devote himself to this when he was our age, which motivates us to contribute in the same way he did but in our community.

For October 17th the delegates had a great time at the Okayama University of Science High School with the students, talking about water issues, giving new and effective solutions for the actual challenges. Although in this institution people received us with such gratitude the reality is that we left it we were so much more grateful for their time, warmth and knowledge.

October 17th, We had another great talk with Professor Kano Mitsunobu from whom we could learn that there are many other factors that are involved in building a sustainable society, such as mental health.

We also listened and took notes of the interesting contributions that Professor Kurokawa Kiyoshi gave about wealth and economy around the world.

The program ended with a beautiful dinner surrounded by all the warm-hearted people of Okayama that accompanied us through this learning process.

Thank you so much to all of you.