



Trip to Mongolia! A Japanese High Schooler's Account

My name is Neneka Suemori. I am a second year student at Miyazaki Prefectural West-Miyakonojo High School (宮崎県立都城西高等学校). Today, I'd like to talk about my short-term study abroad experience!

This year, 2023, for 25 days ranging from September 15th to October 8th, I attended Orkhon Khasu International School located in Mongolia's capitol, Ulaanbaatar. I was enabled this experience by one of Japan's representative study abroad programs "Tobitate".

Prior to studying abroad I established two goals. First, to spread awareness of the Japanese-style dance that I practice. Second, I dream of becoming a police officer. A police officer that, no matter the citizenship of who I am interacting with, can adaptively correspond. To realize this dream, I must immerse myself in a diverse plethora of ideologies and places. Additionally, in 2022, I was allowed to perform Japanese dance at the commemorative "50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Japan-Mongolia Diplomatic Relations" event; which, heavily inspired my aspirations to study abroad.

Then, I finally departed and began attending an international school in Ulaanbaatar. As this was my first time studying abroad, I was dreadfully anxious regarding the language barriers. However, when I arrived at the airport, I was saved by everyone's warmth and my anxiety dissipated. I felt especially elated that everyone was trying so hard to communicate with me in Japanese.

The memory that stays with me the most is when I was taken to the Mongolian countryside by my host family. I saw the yurts that I'd only seen in textbooks, rode horses, and learned to appreciate life all over again; truly a once in a life time experience.

My host-mother often served me traditional Mongolian

cuisine. In Mongolia, they often eat mutton but it doesn't have the characteristic "gamey" scent so it's very delicious. The seasoning was also light so I could taste the meat's true flavor.

However, the most surprising characteristic of Mongolia was the number of cars. In a scenery that obviously leads to frequent traffic jams, I enjoyed fun conversation with my host family.

Additionally, the weather was unbelievably frigid. When I went in October, while Japan was 82.4(F) and in the middle of blazing summer, Mongolia was just 37.4(F) degrees. Even with the 37.4(F) degree days barreling on, we were able to wear short sleeves indoors and live comfortably.

I was allowed to briefly drive the car to drive to gorgeous locales and was taken to famous sightseeing spots like Terej Park by my classmates. I will never forget the appreciation and joy that I felt in those moments. I was able to pay attention to aspects that I normally wouldn't have, and naturally become more enlightened.

I was also permitted to become a Japanese teacher for the international schools Japanese classes. Origami was particularly popular. I was thrilled that everyone possessed such a strong interest in Japanese culture. Through teaching about Japanese culture, I was able to learn much about Mongolian culture as well.



This wonderful study abroad experience in Mongolia has become one of my life's treasures and a point of self-confidence. From hereafter as well, I believe I'll be able to stay in touch with my Mongolian host family and friends. I will continue to study hard and spread Japanese dance in order to one day be able to meet them all again!

Information & Notices

☆New Year Event-Display Corner Exhibit!☆

At the Miyakonojo Unification Culture Hall (都城市総合文化ホール), the year's first event (Let's connect the first new year and dreams!) will be held. There will also be a booth from the Miyakonojo International Association.

On the mini-stage, ALT Kyle Johnson is scheduled to perform.

Date and Time: 1/6/2024(Sat) 13:00 to 16:00

Location:

Miyakonojo Unification Culture Hall-First Floor Lobby

Sponsor: Miyakonojo City Culture Promotion Group・MAST Consortium

Questions concerning the Association's booth: Direct towards the MIA office.

Questions concerning the New Year Event: Direct towards the Miyakonojo City Culture Promotion Group TEL:0986-23-7140

Home Page: <https://mj-hall.jp/>

☆World Festa in Miyakonojo 2024☆

We are currently recruiting both groups and individuals as staff for this year's World Festa event. We ask for your cooperation, Miyakonojo and Mimata residents.

Date and Time: 3/2/2024 (Sat) 12:00 to 16:00

Location: Miyakonojo Unification Culture Hall 都城市総合文化ホール

Event Details: An Introduction to Overseas Countries and Regions

Recruiting: Those whose intention aligns with the World Festa's; e.g., international exchange and collaboration and multicultural symbiosis.

Recruiting Details:

1) Country or Region Intro Booth:

Hands-on culture exchange activity-display only is unpermitted

Recruiting those hailing from countries outside of Mongolia, China, and America.

2) International Exchange/Cooperation Group Introduction Corner

Panel Exhibition



3) Volunteer Staff

Duties: Setting up the event the day before, e.g. carrying supplies or setting up panels.

On the day of the event, setting up the booths and helping clean up after.

Assisting with the country introduction booths or being a guide within in the building.

*Based on the number of interested parties, we will adjust accordingly.

This year, there will not be stage performances. Each booth's size, location, and number of panels will be adjusted according to the number of participating groups.

Application deadline: 1/12/2023 (Friday)

Applications and questions need to be sent in advance.

Please call or email your groups name, your name, and the details of your participation to the MIA office.

Movies info C-Plaza Cine-port (Tel: 0986-24-2571)	
17-9 Nakamachi, Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Map-Code (GPS): 117 488 540*55	
● Godzilla -1..0	Upcoming:
● Out	● Wish 12/15
● Wonka	● Spy Family: Code White 12/22
● How do you live?	● Let's go to Karaoke! 1/12
● Flying Saitama 翔んで埼玉	● Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom 1/12
●	● Haikyuu the Movie: Decisive Battle at the Garbage Dump 2/16
	● Matching 2/23