

令和2年度

福岡県移住者子弟留学報告書

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2020 Exchange Students Program for  
Descendants of Immigrants from Fukuoka Prefecture

C o m p l e t i o n R e p o r t

Fukuoka International Exchange Foundation

公益財団法人福岡県国際交流センター

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**Yonekura Ogata Susana Yuu (Bolivia Fukuoka Kenjinkai)**

Nakamura Culinary School

07

**Lee Miles Kiyoshi (Nanka Fukuoka Kenjinkai)**

Kyushu University Graduate School of Humanities



**Bolivia Fukuoka Kenjinkai  
Yonekura Ogata Susana Yuu  
Nakamura Culinary School**

There are a lot of reasons why I wanted to participate in the Study Abroad for Descendent of Immigrants from Fukuoka Prefecture. Since I was a little girl, both my grandfather and parents have been a part of the Fukuoka Kenjinkai in Bolivia. I have also participated in various Kenjinkai social gatherings like welcome and farewell parties, and after hearing about Fukuoka from others I became interested in the Kenpi program. So decided I wanted to go there one day and applied last year.

From an early age I grew up with parents who love cooking and thanks to them, I studied gastronomy at my university. So I chose to continue my studies at the Nakamura Cooking and Confectionery College here in Fukuoka.

During my four years at university, there were many subjects such as cooking, making bread and confectionaries. I remember learning about those subjects was very interesting during my first year. From that time for the three years until my graduation, my brother who hated bread went to Japan for training with JICA. During his time there told me “Japanese bread is insanely delicious.” When he came back, he came to love bread. Since then I became more and more eager to eat and make Japanese bread and wanted to take the opportunity to be a Fukuoka Prefectural exchange student.

I came to Fukuoka earlier than the other international students in order to take the entrance examination to the Nakamura Cooking and Confectionery College. So, I was able to interact with the Fukuoka exchange students from the previous year too. At first, I was worried about how life in Japan would be, but I am grateful to those who taught me how to ride trains and buses and how to get to school. After three months of living in Fukuoka, the Nakamura Cooking and Confectionery College had their entrance ceremony on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Classes started on May 18<sup>th</sup> because of coronavirus. I had made more friends and got used to living in the dormitory. However, I couldn't go out often and really wanted the pandemic to end as soon as possible. It's a shame no one else could come this year to do the exchange program with me.

Half a year passed and I was looking forward to the start of summer in Japan. At that time, I thought if the pandemic settles down, the other international students would be able to come and we could spend the summer together to see the festivals and fireworks around Fukuoka. However, the pandemic continued, and I refrained from going out as much as possible. The summer was so hot, unlike anything I've experienced before.

I got to celebrate my birthday with those who came previously on the program as exchange students and ate at the Dancing Crab. I was so happy because I can't eat crab like that in Bolivia. I also went shopping in Marina City, Canal City and Costco. Some Kazokukai members also invited me to a meal and a barbecue by the sea! I had a lot of fun and made great memories. I am truly grateful to everyone.

I had online classes for about three weeks because there was someone who had coronavirus at school. During the lesson, we listened to the teacher's explanation of how to make bread and then wrote a report. In

the other subjects, I spent about the same amount of time doing homework and writing summaries of the class. I felt lonely because I couldn't make bread or meet my friends in person anymore.

Due to COVID-19, our summer vacation was moved to September for two weeks. During that time, I was supposed to have an off-campus internship. Originally it was going to be for 14 days, 8 hours a day, but because of the pandemic, the internship was shortened to just one week. I worked at a family-owned bakery near my dormitory. I learned a lot about the daily procedures at a bakery.

It's been almost a year since I came to Fukuoka as an international student. It took me some time to get used to life in Japan and school here, but my classmates at school were very kind to me and helped me understand anything I was unsure about. The teachers were also very kind and their explanations were easy to understand. I was able to learn lots of things at school. By actually making the bread dough, I learned the importance of temperature, shaping, fermentation time and types of ingredients. By understanding the role each ingredient has, you can make your favorite type of bread, and so even if you make a mistake, you will know what caused it. Even if you try to make bread using the same technique as the teacher, it may come out completely different! Especially in terms of the volume of bread, there are many reasons that cause this, but the main reason is how a person handles and shapes the dough.

Not only did I learn how to make bread, but also how to handle food properly. I learned about the dangers of food poisoning, causes and how to prevent it, along with how to prevent cross contamination and food loss from parasites as an important part of the confectionery and bakery industry. I'm glad I was able to learn about proper cultural practices in the industry here in Japan like how to dress, greetings, type of vocabulary to use, how to promote products during interviews and how to take initiative actions. I would like to continue to utilize what I learned here in Japan in the future.

I am grateful to the people of Fukuoka Prefecture and the Fukuoka Kenjinkai of Bolivia for giving me this opportunity. When I return to Bolivia, I would like to do my best to support the activities of the Fukuoka Kenjinkai and to help the younger generation who will come in the future, and to be a liaison between Bolivia and Japan.



**Nanka Fukuoka Kenjinkai**  
**Lee Miles Kiyoshi**  
**Kyushu University Graduate School of**  
**Humanities**



Although I was not able to come to Japan until December of last year, I have been participating in classes at Kyushu University since the spring. My classes at Kyushu University felt like a continuation of my studies in college. I attended a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania where I majored in Religion and minored in Japanese. The reason why I initially applied to study at Kyushu University was because a scholar I referenced extensively in my undergraduate thesis is part of the faculty. Ultimately, I was not able to take classes with this professor, but my classes were taught by knowledgeable and welcoming faculty who deepened my understanding of Japanese culture, language, and history.

In my first semester I took classes on Classical Japanese, Japanese Literature, Japanese Art History, and fieldwork in Japanese religion. I selected these courses after consulting my advisor, Professor Carter, whose support over the past year was the foundation of my studies. Although these classes were indeed related to what I learned in college, these graduate level courses far exceeded the level of detail that I was used to. After two years outside of undergrad, it was nice to be back in an academic environment. In particular I looked forward to lively discussions with other students who constantly impressed me with their insights. I was in California for the full duration of the spring semester and had to stay up past midnight several times a week in order to participate in class. Despite this, these classes were stimulating and refreshing after many months of lockdown in the United States. By the end of the semester, I produced an art history paper on the Kasuga Shrine in Nara, an essay comparing Kamo no Chomei and Julia Kristeva, and a translation of a passage from a medieval Buddhist text known as the Shobogenzo Zuimonki.



In my second semester I took similar classes in the International Humanities program on Premodern Japanese history, Azuchi-Momoyama period art history, and religion but also participated in classes outside of the department. I took a class on modern Japanese history as well as a class taught in Japanese on English poetry. The history class gave me a great deal of insight on modern Japanese culture which gave me an entirely new perspective on Japanese culture and society. The poetry class was difficult for me because of the very technical terms used but as the only native English speaker in the class I was able to share insights and clarify ideas for my Japanese peers. Overall, this semester further expanded my understanding of Japanese history and culture, and exposed me to high-level Japanese discussions.

About halfway through the second semester, I was finally able to come to Japan. After landing and testing negative for COVID-19, I began my mandatory two week stay in Tokyo. I stayed in Tsukiji, a part of Tokyo I had never been to before. Between classes I went to nearby convenience stores and on occasion picked up fresh takeout sushi from a local shop. Psychologically, it was a huge shift to leave my family home in suburban California and find myself isolated in the vast metropolis of Tokyo. Still, this time alone allowed me to reflect on my studies and the world around me.

Once my two week stay ended, I packed my bags, took the subway to Narita airport and flew down to Fukuoka. I moved into the dormitory in Kashii where I met the other current Kenpi student and former Kenpi students. I began jogging around Kashii, familiarizing myself with the area and nearby shrines. Although classes remained online throughout the semester, I was able to visit Kyushu University and travelled an hour and a half by train and bus to the recently built Campus in Itoshima. There I was able to meet Professor Carter in-person and peruse the research materials available on campus. I did not return to campus for the rest of the semester because of how far away it is, but I plan on meeting up with my classmates as well before I return to America.

2020 ended and I participated in a Hatsumode event at Gokoku Shrine with members of the Kenjinkai. Afterwards, we had lunch and strolled through the Japanese Garden in Ohori Park followed by something of an equestrian photoshoot in nearby Maizuru Park. Pictures of me sitting astride a horse, brandishing a katana ended up in Nishinippon Shimbun!

Since I arrived in Fukuoka, much of time has been spent staying with my relatives in Kurume. Because classes were held online, I was able to participate in classes from Kurume as well. After weeks of eating instant food from convenience stores and supermarkets, home-cooked meals have been a welcome change. I have made several trips to various destinations within Kyushu with my relatives. I returned once more to Itoshima where we ate grilled oysters and checked out local shops and shrines. We went to the beautiful Yutoku Inari Shrine in Saga Prefecture. On a particularly snowy day, I visited Dazaifu and went to the Kyushu National Museum where I was able to see in person art and artifacts I have been studying online. Recently, I travelled to nearby Yame where my grandparents lived before immigrating to the United States. However, the location that has left the biggest impact on me is Mount Kora. At a modest 312 meters high, it makes for a relatively short hike. The grand Koura Taisha Shrine is nestled into the top of the mountain but I have discovered many smaller shrines and Buddhist icons along the lesser-trod paths up and down the mountain.

When I return to United States, I plan to begin law school in the fall. Throughout my time in Japan, I have also been writing and submitting applications to schools online. Influenced by my studies and time in Japan, I intend to pursue a career in international law with a focus on the intersection between Japanese and American law. I believe that such a career would enable me to continue participating in Kenjinkai events in both Japan and America. Although my time in Japan was cut short as a result of COVID-19, I have been able to connect deeply with Fukuoka and its people. I hope that in the future I can support other Kenpi students so that they too can experience this as well.



Miles Lee joined our program as a visiting student from April 2020 to March 2021. Throughout this time period, he took a full curriculum of courses with me and my colleagues in the International Master's Program (IMAP, J. 広人文学) at Kyushu University. His circumstances were especially challenged by the Covid-19 pandemic. Originally, he planned to reside in Fukuoka for the duration of his year of study. Because of travel restrictions, this time period was unfortunately shortened to about four months. This meant he could not fully take advantage of his year abroad plans and immerse himself in campus life here.

Despite these challenges, Miles was an exceptional student all-around. From his home in San Francisco, he often stayed up until at least midnight in order to attend our online classes. Miles was especially interested in religious studies courses. He took two of my courses: one on fieldwork in Japan and one on the sacred sites and the role of 'place' in Japanese religion. In our online class sessions, he always came prepared for discussion and student presentations. He made insightful comments, was especially thoughtful in his reaction to articles and books, and greatly contributed to our academic discussions and the general atmosphere of the class. It was a great pleasure to have Miles in our program. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.