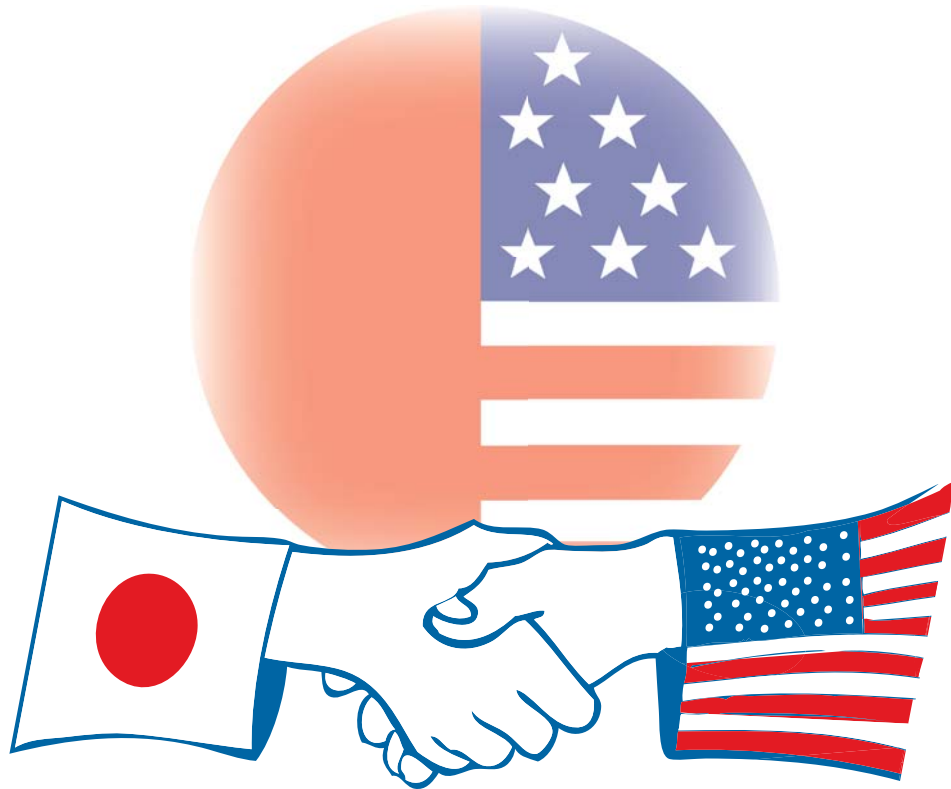


59th Japan-America Student Conference

*Advocating Japan-America
Participation in Global Change*

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Tokyo - Akita - Hiroshima - Kyoto

July 22 - August 20, 2007

OVERVIEW

The Japan-America Student Conference (JASC) is an educational and cultural exchange program for university students. Each year, 36 American and 36 Japanese students from diverse backgrounds spend an intense month living, traveling, and studying together. During the 59th Conference in Japan, students will work to deepen the ties between the U.S. and Japan. The delegates will collaborate with leaders in business, academia, and government on contemporary social, economic, and political issues that face the U.S., Japan and the world. JASC is student managed by 16 Executive Committee (EC) members from both countries who work in collaboration with JASC, Inc. in Washington, DC and the International Education Center in Tokyo.

HISTORY

JASC is the oldest student-run exchange between these two countries. In 1934, a small group of Japanese university students concerned about the deteriorating relations between the U.S. and Japan initiated the first JASC in Tokyo. The following year, American students reciprocated by hosting the second JASC. This began the tradition of alternating host countries annually. Although World War II forced the suspension of JASC, it was revived in 1947 by Japanese and American students living in Japan. From its origin, JASC has been student-run, which ensures dynamic discussion focused on pressing current issues. Throughout its rich history, many JASC alumni from both nations have gone on to achieve distinction in business, academia, government and other circles.

PROGRAM

The Conference will travel to four Japanese sites for academic roundtable discussions, cultural and social events, lectures and panel presentations. These experiences will provide a foundation for mutual understanding, social awareness, cultural sensitivity, and exchange of ideas. More importantly, the bonds that will form as a result of the 72 students living and working together will offer the basis for life-long friendships that will further strengthen the ties between Japan and the United States.

THEME

Though themes vary annually, JASC's mission, "Promoting Peace Through Mutual Understanding, Friendship and Trust between the United States and Japan," remains central to every JASC. JASC recognizes the strong partnership forged through political, cultural, and economic understanding. We, the 59th Executive Committee (EC), believe that it is imperative for the United States and Japan to reflect on their past histories and examine future roles in addressing local, national, and global issues.

The 59th Conference will proceed under the theme "Advocating Japan-America Participation in Global Change." Japan and America represent two major economies and democracies that are capable of combating issues in our world today—how they must work, where they must act, and what they must do will be a focus of this conference. As students, we stand in a unique position, and it is our responsibility to participate in contemporary politics and diplomacy.

ORGANIZATION

Delegates of each JASC elect 8 students from each country to serve on the Executive Committee at the end of the Conference. The responsibility of this volunteer group is to plan and implement the next JASC, recruit and select delegates. The American and Japanese Committee members share joint authority in planning and managing the Conference. Accordingly, if you enjoy your experience with the 59th JASC, you are encouraged to run for a Committee member for the 60th Anniversary JASC, which will convene in America.

59TH JASC SCHEDULE (Tentative)

July 22 – 25: North Central College, Naperville, IL

July 26 – August 2: Tokyo

August 2 – 6: Akita

August 6 – 11: Hiroshima

August 11 – 20: Kyoto

Delegate Selection: American delegates will be selected from all fields of study and will range from first year college students to Ph.D. candidates. Delegates need not be Asian studies majors or studying Japanese language because English is the primary language of the Conference. In fact, we strongly encourage students of other disciplines to apply in order to broaden the depth of our student representation. Each applicant will be asked to submit short essays, an autobiographical essay, writing sample, current transcript and letters of recommendation. Upon selection, delegates will prepare a roundtable-related paper prior to the Conference.

Participation Fee: For the 59th JASC, the participation fee is \$3,000, which covers food, lodging and group travel for the duration of the Conference. Domestic transportation to and from the American Orientation site (Chicago, IL) is the responsibility of the individual delegate.

Scholarship & Financial Aid: Each year many American delegates receive full or partial financial support from their universities or other organizations. Upon selection, JASC, Inc. and the American Executive Committee can provide advice for locating and obtaining scholarships and financial aid.

Application Fee: \$15 (non-refundable)

Deadline: February 15, 2007. Applications may be printed from our website at www.jasc.org. For more information, or to request another brochure or application form, please contact:

Japan-America Student Conference, Inc.

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59th JASC Roundtable Description

As a key component of the Conference experience, delegates will serve on one of seven roundtables, each of which is related to the 59th JASC theme. During the sessions, delegates will engage in active discussions, field trips, lectures, and panel presentations. The specific approach taken by each roundtable will be decided by the delegates in conjunction with their roundtable leaders prior to the Conference. In preparation for the Conference, delegates will research, write, and share a paper about a specific issue. When overlapping topics arise, joint roundtable sessions provide delegates with the opportunity to collaborate with other roundtables to generate new ideas and perspectives. These discussions will then serve as the foundation for the creation of a roundtable final project that the delegates will present at the Final Forum, which will conclude the 59th JASC experience.

Creating a Global Citizen: Education Focused on International Concerns

In a world of increasing globalization, it is becoming more important for students to have an international perspective. In this roundtable, we will examine school curriculums and problems from Japan, America, and several other countries. Throughout our discussions, we will explore the following questions: What does it mean to be a “Global Citizen”? How much effort should be used in schools to teach students values and perceptions based on international ideas? How can we overcome language and cultural barriers? Delegates are encouraged to share their insights and experiences and work to create a final project.

Eastern and Western Popular Art: Who is Imitating Whom?

In the last half century, it has been said that Asia was generally imitating American popular culture in several ways. But near the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the exchange has become less one-sided. In America, Haruki Murakami is famous for his surreal fiction, J-pop’s synthetic style is giving cues to hip-hop producers, and anime has several of its own TV channels. The East’s influence is reaching an equilibrium with the West’s; but who is chasing whom? Are the cultures still distinctly different or are they fusing together? Can what’s popular actually promote cultural understanding or just stereotypes? And most importantly, what will this mixing of cultures mean for peace in Asia and elsewhere?

Opposed Identities: Ideology, Ethnicity and Inequality in Conflict

From slavery and the Civil War to the Nanking Massacre and the Pacific War, opposed identities have played a major role in the formation of some of the most severe conflicts in the world. In this roundtable we will focus on a few questions related to ethnic, religious, and political identities. We want to consider how identities are formed, how they are maintained, why they have so much power, and how can we retain positive identities while avoiding conflict. We will examine global examples while relating them to identity conflict in the United States and Japan, such as discrimination, indigenous peoples, and class distinction.

Pacifism and Belligerence: Examining Different Perspectives on the Use of Force

Violence has existed since the beginning of our history. In the present day, our two countries have different stances on how force should be used, yet we remain strong allies. Is pacifism feasible? Is violence sometimes the only path to justice? Realizing that violence applies to all of humanity, our roundtable will discuss not only Japan and America, but also other nations, non-state actors, and international organizations. Coming from our unique position as students in Japan and America, we will decide what we can do as the goal of our discussion.

Innovative Approaches to International Development

Although poverty is considered a major international issue, many people either ignore the problem, or feel too helpless to address it. Often discussed within the vague academic framework of international development, international organizations, and governments, NGOs are said to be the major actors in resolving this issue. However, there has been a growing trend in smaller, more individual-based responses to poverty in the third world. This roundtable will look beyond the traditional methods of international development. It will also explore unconventional approaches to solving poverty such as individual buying habits, businesses founded on ethical principles, and student activism. We will examine both traditional and innovative strategies that allow the individual to combat poverty.

Media Influence on Global Society

The power of the media is growing. With the ability to influence both politics and public opinion, the need for media to be used responsibly is becoming increasingly important for the promotion of peace and equality worldwide. This roundtable will address issues related to media and the ways that they are used within a global context. The subtopics of this group will cover issues including: applications of technology, advertising, business and economic influences, distortions in the media, propaganda, accuracy of social perceptions, and consumer culture.

Nationalism: Patriotism or Xenophobia?

The rise of neo-conservatives in the U.S. has raised serious concerns throughout the world, and the emergence of right-wingers in Japan has had significant effects in Japan and the rest of Asia. How do these phenomena fit into this era of globalization? Do we need nationalism? If yes, why is it important, and how can we prevent it from shifting to xenophobia? These are some of the questions we want to explore in this roundtable. By holding forums with other Asian students, visiting various political institutions, and discussing the roles of education, media, economics, etc., in establishing a sense of nationalism within people, we will attempt to identify the difference between good patriotism and xenophobia.

SPECIAL TOPICS

There will also be time designated for additional reflection and Special Topic discussions that may address any social, political, cultural, scientific, or personal issue. Both EC and delegates will be given the chance to create and lead discussions on topics not specifically covered in the roundtables. These Special Topic discussions will be dialogue oriented and less formal than the roundtables but important and enlightening nonetheless, as a way to explore potentially sensitive topics in greater depth.

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