Fukushima Ambassadors Program III

End of Program Report

Created By:
Fukushima University International Center

Volunteer Work in Minami Soma City
Odaka, Minami Soma City
Introduction

More than two years have passed since the March 11th disasters, yet its impact continues to affect those living in Fukushima prefecture. Over 150,000 citizens remain without a permanent home, while a larger number of evacuees struggle to find stable sources of income in their new living environments. Concerns, often unsubstantiated, about radioactive contamination bedevil small businesses and industries, while global awareness of the March 11th tragedies is slowly waning. The Fukushima Ambassadors Program was an opportunity for 10 students from Middle Tennessee State University (hereon referred as MTSU) to see, hear, and reflect objectively upon the challenges faced in Fukushima today. By implementing a community-service based, hands-on approach to learning, the program helped students evaluate any preconceptions they may have had about post-3/11 Fukushima, and become, if they wished, an agent for its recovery.

About the Program

Program Focus
To provide students from MTSU with hands-on learning opportunities that focused on the physical, financial, and social consequences of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident disasters.

Overall Aims of the Program
- further each students’ understanding of the impacts that the disaster has had on the lives of people living in Fukushima
- dispel any misconceptions students may have had of Fukushima
- help students identify ways they can become an agent for change in the recovery efforts for Fukushima

Main Activities
- Program Orientation at Fukushima University
- Inspection tour of disaster-affected areas on the coast of Fukushima
- Homestay at Soma City
- Interaction with evacuated residents
- Disaster relief volunteer work (clearing debris) at Odaka District
- Field study of local agricultural and tourism sectors affected by nuclear disasters
- Interaction with kindergarten and junior high school students living in disaster-affected regions
- Farm Stay in Towa region

Program Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival in Tokyo:</th>
<th>May 14th, 2013</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fukushima Ambassadors Program</td>
<td>May 14th - 25th, 2013</td>
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Participants
Ten students from MTSU and 32 student volunteers from Fukushima University participated in the program.

Chaperons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doug Huffington</td>
<td>Director, Global Studies Program</td>
<td>Middle Tennessee State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corey L. Perkins</td>
<td>Professor, Global Studies Program</td>
<td>Middle Tennessee State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>William McMichael</td>
<td>Assistant Director, International Center</td>
<td>Fukushima University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Min He</td>
<td>Specialist, International Center</td>
<td>Fukushima University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day One (Tues May 14)</td>
<td>Travel to Fukushima from Narita Airport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day Two (Wed May 15)</td>
<td>Fukushima City</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Program Orientation</td>
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<td>· Scavenger Hunt at Fukushima University (with student volunteers)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Seminar on Radiation Safety</td>
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<td>· Visit to Fukushima Radiation Decontamination Center</td>
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<td>Day Three (Thurs May 16)</td>
<td>· Visit and exchanges with Fukushima Kaigi, a grass-roots NPO involved in Fukushima’s restoration</td>
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<td>· Visit to Azuma Fruit Orchards</td>
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<td>· Visit to Tsuchiyu Onsen, site inspection of new energy sources</td>
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<td>Day Four (Fri May 17)</td>
<td>Soma City</td>
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<td>· International day at Haragama Kindergarten</td>
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<td>· Site inspection of disaster areas</td>
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<td>· Volunteer at temporary housing district</td>
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<td>· Homestay in Soma City</td>
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<td>Day Five (Sat May 18)</td>
<td>· Site Inspection of Fishery Reconstruction in Soma City</td>
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<td>· Homestay in Soma City</td>
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<td>Day Six (Sun May 19)</td>
<td>· Cleaning debris at Odaka district, Minami Soma City</td>
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<td>· Homestay in Soma City</td>
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<td>Day Seven (Mon May 20)</td>
<td>Aizu Wakamatsu City</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Interaction with students from Aizu Gakuho Junior High school</td>
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<td>· Study tour of Happy Solar Project in Kitakata City</td>
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<td>· Overnight stay at local Inn</td>
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<td>Day Eight (Tues May 21)</td>
<td>Nihonmatsu City</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Sightseeing in Aizu Wakamatsu City</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Farm stay at Towa Region</td>
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<td>Day Nine (Wed May 22)</td>
<td>· Farm stay at Towa Region</td>
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<td>Day Ten (Thurs May 23)</td>
<td>· Farm stay at Towa Region</td>
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<td>Day Eleven (Fri May 24)</td>
<td>Fukushima City</td>
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<td>· Opinion Exchange with JANIC, NPO for supporting children</td>
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<td>· Closing lectures, final opinion exchange with Fukushima University students</td>
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<td>Dear Twelve (Sat May 25)</td>
<td>· Depart for Narita Airport</td>
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Day One (Wednesday, May 15th, 2013)

Student greeting at train station

Meeting with president

Seminar on radiation safety

Welcome party
Day Two (Thursday, May 16th, 2013)

Visit with a local NPO

Lunch at Ka-chan no Chikara

Visit to Azuma Orchards

Field research on renewable geothermal energy
Day Three (Friday, May 17th, 2013)

Play day with kids at Haragama kindergarten

Site inspection of disaster -affected areas

Interaction with residents at temporary housing
Day Five (Saturday, May 18th, 2013)

Observation of Soma Bay from fishing boat

Lunch at local restaurant in Soma
Day Six (Sunday, May 19th, 2013)

Volunteer work at Minami Soma
Day Seven (Monday, May 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2013)

Saying goodbye to host families

International day at Aizu Gakuho Junior High school

Opinion exchange with local NPO in Kitakata
Day Eight (Tuesday, May 21st, 2013)

Visit to Tsurugajyo Castle

Meet and greet with farm homestays
Day Nine (Wednesday, May 22\textsuperscript{nd}), Day Ten (Thursday, May 23\textsuperscript{rd}, 2013)

Farm stay at Nihonmatsu

Group BBQ party
Day Eleven (Friday, May 24\textsuperscript{th}), Day Twelve (Saturday, May 25\textsuperscript{th}, 2013)

- Opinion exchange with local NGO
- Closing workshops
- MOU signing ceremony
- Farewell party
Messages from Participants

My host family and farm stay were very interactive and one-on-one. Having a buddy student and lots of adventures with them was very helpful and personal. I loved all the people, country and food. I really learned a lot about social difficulties and also about successes too. Would love a reunion tour!! Loved Japan immensely. It will be hard to leave.

- MTSU Student

Not only did I learn a lot by using English, I learned things about Fukushima and got to experience things I had never experienced before together with students from MTSU. Of all the past programs, I can honestly say I enjoyed this program the most! Thank you very much for the wonderful experience.

- Fukushima University Student

This is a program that should be continued for the betterment of future generations, and also for the restoration of Fukushima. I appreciate this program, excellent efforts to support Fukushima and its strong people.

- MTSU Student

One thing that really impressed me was how proactive everybody was in the program. I strongly felt there was no time to be shy! The students from MTSU were very friendly, but also held very firm personal beliefs and opinions. I quickly learned to admire them for this, and feel that they have helped me grow as a person. I wish to continue participating in programs like these!

- Fukushima University Student

We met countless people while visiting the city, and we participated in home stays and farm stays as well. We truly visited every aspect of Japan. The parts known back home to the ones I did not know were there. This trip has changed me in ways I cannot explain. I will not look at others the same way. I will come back!

- MTSU Student
Group Work (Idea Mandala)

Group A: Shavangi, Morgan, Natsuki, Everett

**Topic:** How to overcome generation gaps created within affected communities resulting from younger generations leaving Fukushima

**Center Block**

1) Information for living in Fukushima
2) Putting more money into top-notch education
3) Offering medical personnel good employment opportunities and benefits
4) Income Tax Breaks
5) Community Building
6) Alternative Job Ideas
7) Creation of an Entertaining and Engaging Environment
Other Blocks:

1) **Information for living in Fukushima**: correct information, volunteer opportunities, free information, easy to understand, good chances to choose information, more open information, information about health effects of radiation

2) **Putting more money into top-notch education**: highly educated teachers, leading professional scholars with cutting edge technology, new research opportunities, tap into global international education market for staff as well as students, benefits for teachers and students, sports culture with a greater focus on indoor activity, Internship opportunities into retiring trades, financial compensation for suffering families

3) **Offering medical personnel good employment opportunities and benefits**: create new system, make a direct difference, job security, new research opportunities, higher wages, employment opportunities, finance education, benefits

4) **Creation of an Entertaining and Engaging Environment**: karaoke, shopping, sports, entertainment, sightseeing, eating and drinking, outdoor activities, painting (Fine Arts)

5) **Income Tax Breaks**: for younger generations to stay, for starting a family, for starting a farm, for allowing, for working in Fukushima

6) **Alternative Job Ideas**: have Japan’s first brothel, creation of a Japanese silicon valley, shooting range, gay capital of Japan, race tracks

7) **Community Building**: Common resources, time, sharing traditions, events / festivals
Group B: Bethany, Shoko, Kiaya, Yuka, Katie

**Topic:** How to Overcome Negative Preconceptions (Globally)

**Center Block (from left to right)**

1) Interactive Programs
2) Volunteer Activities
3) Informative Lectures
4) Media and News
5) Interviews from Fukushima Residents
6) Holiday / Day of Remembrance
7) International Research on Fukushima
8) Internet Communications
Other Blocks (from left to right):

1) **Interactive Programs:** affiliations with universities around the world, school programs, volunteer programs, global communications cultural exchanges, cultural activities, hands-on education trips to Fukushima

2) **Volunteer Activities:** debris clean-up, fun day or camps for kids, food donations, communicate with and support elders in community, entertainment, help with agriculture and fishery, consuming food from Fukushima farmers; farmer’s market, decontamination

3) **Informative Lectures:** lectures on truth of radiation, Q&As, expert opinions, social effects and issues, economic effects and issues, medical facts and info, tourist info and safety, daily life in Fukushima

4) **Media and News:** documentary, popular singer’s support, informative news program, music festival support, updates on current status of Fukushima, interviews in news, books on issues, support from global news programs

5) **Interview from Fukushima Residents:** fishing families, agricultural families, children, parents with concerns, separated families/victims, young adults vs. older generations, people who have evacuated (moved away), people who have evacuated (temporary housing)

6) **Holiday / Day of Remembrance:** music, move about the disasters, politicians to acknowledge, designate a symbol for that day, Fukushima products gain support, memorial to victims and their families, festival, donations for reconstruction

7) **International research on Fukushima:** experts from Chernobyl, reconstruction ideas, communication abroad, environmental experts, economic research, information for future generations, continue research on radiation, global preparations and understanding for future

8) **Internet Communications:** blogging, Facebook support groups, YouTube, twitter, e-mail, Skype interview and meetings, internet meetings with locals, informative we pages
Group C: Brian, Derrick, Akira, Ayano

**Topic:** How to Overcome Negative Preconceptions (Locally)

**Center Block (from left to right):**

1) TV Ads
2) Group Events concerning particular topic
3) Public Service Announcements
4) New Programs (on TV)
5) Display all Statistics
6) Tourists
7) Japanese Celebrity sponsors for Fukushima
8) Very detailed checks and analysis
Other Blocks (from left to right):

1) **TV Ads**: news, general advertisement for Fukushima products, tell only good things, Fukushima’s severe check ads, local reminders, commercials about problems,. Show similar examples and how they were fixed, volunteer ads

2) **Group Events Concerning Particular Topic**: information sessions, benefit concerts, kids summer programs, parent programs, more

3) **Public service announcements**: Ichiro hits a ball into somewhere in Fukushima!, huge kendo battle in all Fukushima’s areas, Goku is somewhere in Fukushima

4) **News Programs**: tell the truth without personal ideas, state the solution, versus hinting at them, evening, similar issues with same problems, MTSU, no bias, morning, entertaining while informed!

5) **Display All Statistics**: posts, reveal all facts whether they are positive or negative, car ads, TV ads, billboards, seminars, handouts, computer ads

6) **Tourist**: casinos in devastated areas, tax haven for tourists, museums, theme parks, more karaoke, Fukushima-themed bus tours, Disney land, huge sakura park

7) **Celebrity sponsorship for Fukushima**: Abe, Ichiro, Mao Asada, AKB 48, Figure Skating, Goku, NBA players, One Direction

8) **Very Detailed checks and Analysis**: continued checking and analysis, house/communities rules and resolutions, annual radiation checks, by government, monthly reports, police strict enforcement, codes
Group D: Eli, Liz, Reiko, Dan

**Topic:** Community Integration

**Center Block (from left to right):**

1) Community Programs
2) Land
3) Age
4) Outreach Programs
5) Jobs
6) Network
7) Education
8) Food
Other Blocks (from left to right):

1) **Interactive Programs**: medical screening(s), sponsorship families to refugee family (like buddy students), transportation support/access to ensure mobility to attend events, festivals, community gardens shared garden shared labor and harvest, after-school activities

2) **Land**: set up new shops to let allow new people provide a service, make sure every person has land to live with comfortably, set aside land for a park, let the elders teach why the land is to be respected, teach refugees which land is sacred, have everyone lean more about the areas they are moving into, have clear property lines, anyone disrespecting the land must leave

3) **Use Age**: Have the elders in the community spend time with the kids, life stories, have kids from other cultures be taught by the parents of others, send kids to the homes of the elderly to help, have all the elderly meet up once a week, make groups of teens go around cleaning, build places for different age groups to mingle, have elders tell stories and kids recite them in a different light

4) **Outreach program**: community center: standardized information one source resource information location, counseling (group, individual, family), job training and referrals services, internet access at community centers, sports youth leagues

5) **Jobs**: job information, open new businesses to create jobs and advertise about local products, grants from the government, re-training new careers so people can adapt with the new environment,

6) **Network**: break the “cold air”, education games, FB/LINE, individual group, area’s website, school website, gossip, correct information article, connecting via online games

7) **Education**: reduce discrimination, we are all the same, harmony, new community created!, explanation, parent, teacher, game (outdoor, human nature)

8) **Food**: Ads, Inspection (Internationally), food festival, competitions, let people try the local foods in events, festivals