

There are a wide variety of exchange programs for young people at different levels. TMDU students and young researchers improve their skills by participating in training programs abroad.

## Reports of TMDU Students in the World

### Report 01

#### Great experiences in Ghana



**Rinko Hino**  
4th year student, Faculty of Medicine  
Project Semester in Ghana



**WHAT ARE YOU** doing in Ghana? How is Ghana? What are you studying in Japan? Why did you decide to enter medical school? Ghanaian researchers shower questions on me. Here in Ghana, everybody talks to us, not only at NMIMR (the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research) to which I belong, but also in town. The people here don't like silence. You can always hear something discussion, conversation, and sometimes music. Two months have passed since I came to Ghana. In this short essay, I'll talk about three things that I'd never been aware of until I left Japan.

First, language. I realized that there's nothing special about making do in more than one language. Many Ghana-

ians use English as a common language, but they also use the local language, so they have two languages. I'm researching malaria. Over three million malaria cases are reported in Ghana every year, killing over four thousand people. Our team is investigating the relationship between resistance to anti-malaria drug and polymorphism in genes. We visit hospitals to collect samples of blood infected with malaria. The medical staff communicates with each other in English as a matter of course, while they talk with most of the patients in the local language. Although one of the doctors at the hospital said that I was lucky to learn medicine in my own language because it's easier to explain something to your patients, I envied



Many people at NMIMR go to the lab in Ghanaian dress on Fridays.

them because we can't do without English in science these days.

However, it's more important to get across what I think than to be able to speak English fluently. In this country where people don't like quiet, everyone is required to have their own ideas. If I say what I want to do, people meet my requests as far as they can. When I first visited the hospital, I wanted to take a look around and see the malaria patients because I'd never seen patients with malaria in Japan. I asked the staff and they obliged right away. One pediatrician explained the symptoms, treatment and prognosis of a serious malaria patient, a one-year old boy who had been in hospital for five days. By asking, we were able to do what we wanted, even though we didn't expect it.

Waiting patiently for something or somebody is another thing that I learned in Ghana. Unlike in Japan, blackouts or water problems often occur here. Unlike Japanese, some Ghanaians are often late for appointments. Initially,



With research assistants.

when the water stopped or when someone didn't come on time, I was impatient. However, I've experienced these things so many times that it's changed how I think. If I wait for water or electricity, they'll come eventually, and if I wait for someone, they'll come eventu-

ally too.

When I go back to Japan, I'll be surprised at how different things are from Ghana and I may notice new things about Japan. I want to make use of what I've learned, including the three things I've mentioned, after I return to Japan.

### Report 02

#### Five months at Imperial College, London



**Yukiyo Narikawa**  
5th year student, Faculty of Medicine  
TMDU-Imperial Exchange Program



**WHAT CAN STUDYING** abroad mean for us? I believe the answer is whatever we want it to mean. There may be abundant chances everywhere while you are abroad, but they do not just fall into your hands; you have to search, find and grab them. I believe what drove me to do so was curiosity.

During the five months, the four of us TMDU exchange students, spent most of our time at separate labs. The laboratory I was working in was located in South Kensington Campus, where most student activity takes place. Students from various departments were working in the same building, struggling with similar research problems, each of them with different backgrounds. Even within our research group, we could make a long list of our nationalities.

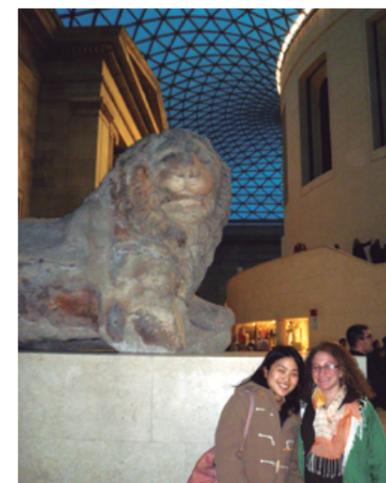
In such a diverse group, I was fortunate enough to be paired with a very educational post-doc, who taught me on a day-to-day basis mainly about science, and sometimes about London life. My very dedicated supervisor also gave me lectures when I asked questions, and helped me write my paper with detailed revision advice. The research topic was to create a viral vector which would help in investigating the function of the autonomic nervous system in the pathogenesis of diabetes. Every basic procedure was almost completely new to me, including cell culture, cloning, virus production and immunocytochemistry.

At first, clueless as I was, every day

seemed challenging, but the members of the lab group helped me get through it and learn the processes one by one. Almost a year has passed since the end of the program, but the five months I spent in the world of basic research still affect me now.

Now that I have a clearer image of what goes on in laboratories, long before their findings are found in the textbooks, I can question what is said in the books, which helps deepen my understanding. I also know that tasks which seem daunting at first can be solved by learning step by step and by cooperating with others.

The precious friends I made at the lab were mainly graduate students and medical students, some of them living outside their homeland. Working with such motivated scientists, learning about their daily lives and their future



Visit to the British Museum.

Studying and living in Ghana sometimes makes me face difficulties, but all the experiences that I have here will make me more mature. I would also like to thank everybody who has supported me and given me a chance to have a great experience in Ghana.



Taken at the lab with lab members.

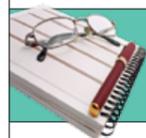
goals, stimulated me to think more freely about my future career plan. Discussions during lunch at the cafeteria about our traditions, culture, history and politics enlightened me about the views of other countries as well as about our own culture. Realizing how much I do not know about my own culture stimulated me to study more and deepen my understanding about Japan.

Looking back, I realize that what helped me learn the most during the five months was curiosity. Whenever I came upon something unknown, it was curiosity that drove me to keep searching for something new. I made an effort to ask questions assertively, to have conversations with various people, and to do whatever I was interested in during the limited time. Doing this all the time opened up a new world to me, beyond anything I had anticipated. Even now, back in Japan, I do just as I did in London, and I find that just having curiosity and taking small actions can open a lot of doors. I believe studying abroad was the most valuable experience in cultivating curiosity and rediscovering new opportunities in my life back at home.

Finally, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to all the teachers and faculty who made this exchange program possible. I will continue to try to make the most of the experience and the experience will no doubt remain in my heart.

Report 03

## Clinical Clerkship at Harvard Medical School



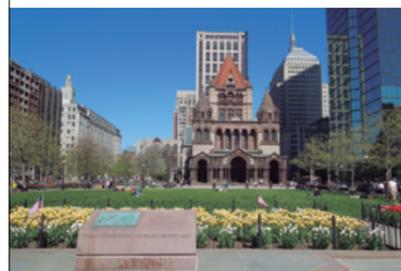
**Yosuke Ojima**  
6th year student, Faculty of Medicine  
HMS Exchange Clerkship Program



**BOSTON IS THE** largest city in the state of Massachusetts. It's also the state capital. Many cultural institutes are located in the city. For instance, Boston has more than 100 universities and colleges, including Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Museum of Fine Arts and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The atmosphere of the city is calm and sophisticated. I participated in a two-month clerkship program at Harvard Medical School (HMS) in spring 2013. I stayed at a local family home for the first month, and in Vanderbilt Hall (the dormitory of HMS) for the next month.

In the TMDU-HMS program, we received special introductory training in history taking, physical examinations, and making progress notes in advance, and so we learned medical terms and clinical reasoning in English, and the customs peculiar to medical care in the United States. Thanks to this training, the clinical clerkship at the American hospitals went quite smoothly.

I rotated to Child Neurology at Children Hospital Boston (CHB) and Multidisciplinary Pain Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). Our training was the same as for HMS students. Every day, I arrived at the hospital around 6:30 and checked the data and notes for my patients that were written by the on-call



The center of Boston.

doctors or nurses. After I listened to my patient's overnight complaints and performed physical examinations, I made a presentation to the team about how my patients were. During my presentation, the attending, fellow and resident doctors sometimes asked me many questions and gave me homework assignments like, "Tell us about Hashimoto Encephalopathy for about five to ten minutes on tomorrow's round."

Although I had to spend a lot of time preparing these presentations, they were an effective way of obtaining a lot of knowledge. Medical students were welcome to join the discussion and were required to give their opinions. Since all the doctors naturally quoted papers or journals as supporting evidence in the discussion, I tried searching online for relevant articles. I believe that this habit will be useful in my career as a doctor even in Japan.

When I rotated to Multidisciplinary Pain Medicine, I was given an opportunity to make a 45-minute presentation. I took "Acupuncture in pain management" as my topic, and spent three weeks preparing. Many staff members listened to my presentation carefully



TMDU-HMS program class of 2013.



Acute Pain Service Team at MGH.

and gave me very helpful feedback based on evidence. This educational atmosphere stimulated me and I learned how to improve my presentations to convey my ideas to others.

While I was in Boston, the Boston Marathon bombing occurred, killing three people and injuring 264. I just happened to be watching the marathon, and saw people in panic running this way and that. After this atrocity, there were many police officers and soldiers with shotguns around the city, especially near the hospitals.

The victims were treated at nearby local hospitals, and I also saw some of these patients. Some lost their extremities, and others suffered terrible pain from mental stress. This tragedy was sad and unforgettable. However, if I had not been there, I doubt that I would have thought about it in real terms.

Through the HMS program, I experienced many precious things that I will never forget. This includes the knowledge I obtained, the constant effort I made, and the connection with the many kind and helpful people I met before, during and after the clerkship at HMS. I am sure that I can make use of these experiences in my future career.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the staff members and students at HMS and TMDU concerned. In particular, I must offer my appreciation to Professor Takada, Assistant Professor Moross, and the members of Global Education and Career Development. Many thanks to my classmates who went to Boston and studied with me. Without them, I could not have had this wonderful time.

Report 04

## A challenging experience



**Takayuki Suga**  
4th year student, Faculty of Dentistry  
Research Project in Korea



**IT IS A** great pleasure for me to write an essay about studying overseas. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who supported this program. From June through September, I researched tooth development in the Oral Biology Laboratory at Yonsei University, one of the most famous universities in Korea. Tooth development is elaborately regulated by interactions between proteins. We examined the expressions of two possible candidate genes involved at each stage of tooth development.

Research in Korea involved many difficulties related to differences in customs and language problems. However, the laboratory members were very kind, and they patiently taught me how to conduct research. Thanks to them, I did well in my research and won the Dean's award for it. Besides research, the professor kindly gave me a chance to join some classes at the dental school and to visit and observe dental hospitals.

Through this experience, I learned about the differences between dental education and treatment. There are many things we should consider. For instance, the lobby of a hospital is like that of first-class hotel, which puts pa-

tients in a positive frame of mind. I think this is an important factor when somebody is suffering from illness.

It was the first time for me to live abroad for a relatively long time. However, life in Seoul was comfortable because everything was convenient, just as it is in Tokyo. During that period, I visited many famous places and sight-seeing spots. What struck me most about Korean culture was its similarity to Japanese culture.

Although I was seeing things for the first time, I felt I knew what it was. It was quite a weird feeling. It seems that Japan and Korea are brothers. These days, the relationship between the two countries has deteriorated, but I hope it will improve in the future.

Through my encounter with foreign culture, I discovered that I didn't know very much about my own culture. So after coming back to Japan, I developed an interest in and appreciation of Japanese culture. When you go abroad, you have to express your opinion from the standpoint of a Japanese person, but you can't do that if you don't know much about Japan. To be global doesn't mean speaking English well. That's something which I came to realize fully



At one of the world heritage sites in Korea.

after this program.

Unfortunately I didn't have much opportunity to communicate with Korean people other than lab members. That was regrettable, because I like to make friends with foreign people. I wanted them to talk to me more. I guess the same thing can be said of the international students in TMDU—they actually said so when I asked them about it.

Please don't hesitate to talk to international students. There is no difference between us. I believe that changing your mindset and attitude to them at an individual level will make our university a better place to study for students from all over the world.

Now that we live in a global world, the experience gained from studying abroad is more important than ever before. Fortunately, TMDU offers us lots of opportunities to study abroad. You can even get scholarships for it. Why not use them?

Studying in Korea was an unforgettable and precious experience, and I would like to make the best use of it. I hope this essay will be a useful reference for students who want to participate in this kind of research program.

Report 05

## Meaningful and precious time in Jakarta



**Hiromi Kominato**  
3rd year students, Faculty of Dentistry  
FY2013 Re-inventing Japan Project



**ALMOST THREE MONTHS** have passed since I joined the dental training program at the University of Indonesia (UI) from September 3 to 11, 2013. We had been told that there were many dif-

ferences between Indonesia and Japan, but surprisingly there were even more than we imagined. Here I'm going to write what we experienced and how I felt throughout the program.



With Dr. Bambang Irawan, Dean of the University of Indonesia.

There were two parts to the program, comprising a morning and evening session. Basically in the morning, we par-

ticipated in classes and hospital tours at UI. We also attended a conference in Depok. After school, we enjoyed sight-seeing and had dinner with the students of UI.

At the UI, we attended the PBL class with third year students. Before we went to Indonesia, we were told that the theme would be public health, but in fact the theme was orthodontics. It was difficult for me to understand what was discussed because we hadn't learned orthodontics yet. However, I was very impressed by how well the students of UI speak English. In addition during the class, everyone voiced their opinions. I realized we Japanese students are less enthusiastic about learning and presenting our opinions. Consequently I felt that there is a big gap between the English ability of Indonesian and Japanese dental students.

We also took part in hospital tours. There were several differences between

public and private hospitals in Indonesia. The affiliated hospital that we saw was quite old. We had to use stairs all the time and I saw that some of the taps and ceilings were broken. I was surprised to see patients administering self-oral vacuum during treatment. Interestingly the clinical year starts in fourth grade at UI, so they can definitely treat more patients than us. On the other hand, the private clinic was more sophisticated, clean and relaxing like the ones in Japan. The units were separated and there were two assistants per dentist. There were some specialists at the private clinic, as they treat patients as a team. However, only rich people can afford the fees at private clinics.

What shocked me the most was the size of the gap between the rich and the poor in Indonesia. I saw children who couldn't go to school selling newspapers at the cafeteria, whereas some children were playing with iPhones in the



We performed a dance with Japanese pop music, and UI students showed us traditional songs and dance.

comfortable waiting room of the private dental clinic. These were sad scenes indeed.

After we came back to Japan, I began to think that we need more opportunities for undergraduate exchange programs so that students can learn about the current state of dental care in many different countries. Experiencing this kind of dental training program would motivate us to be better dentists in the future.

Through this training program, I learned a lot of things which broadened my mind and improved my English skill. More than that, I made friends with many dental students in the same year in Indonesia.

During our stay in Jakarta, the students of UI accompanied us everywhere and we had a nice time with them. I can't express how much I appreciate what they've done for us. Even though we stayed in Jakarta for only one week, spending time with them was very meaningful and precious.



We attended the PBL class with third year dental students.

Report 06  
**Our overseas study tour in Taiwan**



**Shizuka Yamamoto**  
2nd year student, Faculty of Dentistry  
Visiting Program for Taipei Medical University



**ELEVEN SECOND YEAR** students of the Oral Health Engineering Course visited Taipei for five days from November 25, 2013, for the student exchange program of the dental technology course offered jointly by TMDU and Taipei Medical University (TMU).

Through this overseas study tour, we gained a lot of knowledge about Taiwanese culture and dental health, and of course enjoyed the foreign culture and atmosphere.

At the School of Dental Technology at TMU, we made PowerPoint presenta-



I met wonderful teachers and students over dinner.

tions introducing Japanese culture, life at TMDU and Japanese dental technicians. TMU students also gave presentations about famous souvenirs, food and sightseeing spots in Taiwan. After



TMDU teachers and students after our presentations.



With Prof. Chung-kwei Lin, Chairman of the School of Dental Technology, in the College of Oral Medicine at Taipei Medical University.

the presentations, TMU students took us on a tour of TMU campus and into town near TMU, and the faculty held a dinner party for us. In addition, some TMU students took us to the Raohe Street night market where we had an enjoyable time. While it was difficult for me to communicate in English with the Taiwanese students because of my poor English, I soon realized that we could communicate with gestures, illustrations and Chinese writing. Having the motivation and attitude to communicate actively is the most important thing.

During our stay in Taipei, we visited several dental laboratories and dental clinics, as well as TMU Hospital. We heard that Taiwanese dental laboratories have rapidly been introducing CAD/CAM systems over the last few years. I was surprised that they use spirit lamps

instead of Bunsen burners to melt wax to avoid high temperatures. I was most impressed by the words of Mr. Kashima who is known as the first Japanese dental technician licensed in Taiwan. He said, "You should always imagine the patient when you make prosthetic appliances, because a dental technician is not only a technician but also a medical worker." His words made me think over and over about the profession of dental technician. A dental technician has much fewer opportunities to meet the patient directly compared with dentists or dental hygienists. However, the dental technician should always be conscious of being part of a medical team, as a professional who manufactures prosthetic appliances which support the patient's health and improve their quality of life.

This study tour in Taiwan was a pre-

cious experience for me. It brought home to me that communicative competency in English, as well as advanced techniques, are essential for becoming a global dental technician. The strong communication ability of the TMU students motivated me to learn more English and specialized subjects.

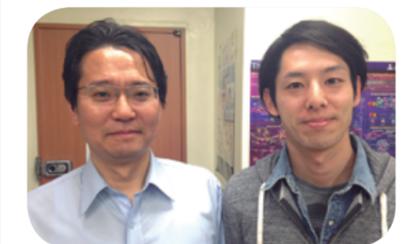
I am going to apply this experience of studying abroad in my future studies and I would like to become an internationally-minded dental technician with a broad view.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude from the bottom of heart to the teachers and students of TMU, to the Taiwanese dental technicians who kindly welcomed and took care of us, and to our teachers for giving us the valuable opportunity to experience overseas study.

Report 07  
**A stay in Seoul**



**Kenji Kawara**  
4th year student, Faculty of Medicine  
Project Semester in Korea



Prof. Won-Woo Lee (left) is a really energetic man.

**MY PROJECT SEMESTER** began around March. At that time, in all honesty, I had a feeling of powerlessness, although there were no clear reasons for it. "I have to do something" I thought, and decided to study in a foreign country during project semester. After the selection had finished, it turned out that I could go to Seoul National University alone.

However, instead of feeling uneasy, I was excited because I believed that being alone in a foreign country would be good training for me. Some people say that living in a foreign country is nothing special—you just happen to be abroad. But anyhow, I was still eager to place myself in an unusual environment, so I decided to go to Seoul.

Now three months have already passed

since I touched down at the airport in Seoul. When I think of the past three months, I can say it was nice. On the very first day I arrived in Seoul, I met with the professor and the other lab members. I casually asked him about the daily schedule, and he told me that the members always stayed until around



Prof. Won-Woo Lee and seven other people work at the laboratory.

is to consider how to inhibit the inflammatory function of monocytes in rheumatoid arthritis through metabolic reprogramming, but at the moment, I'm far from reaching a conclusion.

Now let me explain a little about my daily life in Seoul. I live in a dormitory in Seoul National University Hospital. People at the university can generally speak English, but, surprisingly, most ordinary people in the city cannot at all. Therefore, I learned several sentences for surviving in Korea, such as "I can't understand Korean," "Where is—," "Can I have—" One of the interesting things is that I can now say "I can't understand Korean" really fluently. Imagine someone who says in fluent English that they can't speak English. When I say that in Korean, people are often surprised and say I speak Korean very well.

As I said above, life in Seoul is very interesting. I can dedicate myself to studying and experiments. Everything happening around me is totally new, and I feel happy to be a pioneer in a new country. On the other hand, I'm still not sure whether I'm getting a training or not. It might depend heavily on my own effort.



With my supervisor, Dr. Charmaine J Simeonovic.

soon after I arrived. She helped me with a lot of things whenever I lost my way.

When we talk about the projects at the lab, I am always impressed with her diligence, knowledge and ability as a researcher. Also, my supervisor Charmaine and all the lab members treated me very well like an old friend, which made me feel like I had been living in Canberra for a long time. In the past few months, I have got to know a lot of nice people in school, and I have really

21:00 or 22:00, studying or carrying out their experiments. At that point, I wondered if might have chosen the wrong laboratory. For the next couple of weeks, I had to keep reading lots of papers and protocols until around 21:00 in order to prepare for experiments. It was a really hard time for me. However after a few more weeks, I suddenly remembered that I had come here with the purpose of training myself.

Then I felt ashamed of my concern that I might have ended up in a Spartan lab. Fortunately, this awareness seemed to occur with good timing. My period of preparation had finished and I could finally start my experiments. In other

words, I could do something beyond just sitting on a chair. Since then, I've been feeling the benefits of the initial period of study as I apply the ideas and principles I learned in real experiments.

There are seven people working under Prof. Won-Woo Lee at the Immune Cytomics Lab in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Seoul National University College of Medicine, a post doctor, a doctorate student, two Master's course students, and three internship students including me. Prof. Won-Woo Lee is still in his forties and is a really energetic man. He's always busy managing the lab, but he offers us kind support at the same time. My task

Report 08  
**Time flies**



**Kumiko Hayashi**  
4th year student, Faculty of Medicine  
Project Semester in Australia



**TIME FLIES, AND** it has been almost three months since I came to Australia for my project semester as part of the fourth year medical school curriculum. I am currently undertaking research in the Diabetes/Transplantation Immunology Laboratory at the John Curtin School of Medical Research (JCSMR) of the Australian National University from October 2013 to February 2014, under the supervision of Dr. Charmaine Simeonovic and Cathy Gillespie.

It is thanks to the kind support of JCSMR, Prof. Yoshinobu Eishi of TMDU,

and others that I could have this precious opportunity. In this short essay, I will write about my research and my life in Australia.

I still remember well the mixed feelings I had when I first arrived in Canberra at the beginning of October 2013. Of course I was really excited to start my project, but I was very worried about living in a foreign country and staying away from my family for the first time in my life. However, it didn't take long for me to get used to it, because I made a good friend at the lab



The lab had a Christmas lunch.

appreciated their friendship during my stay. I want to keep in touch with them after I return to Japan.

I have done experiments at school from morning till evening, and tried to join in many activities after work. My research project is to localize heparan sulfate (HS) in normal mouse insulin-producing islet beta cells. Previously our laboratory reported the finding that HS is essential for the survival of islet beta cells. In addition, our laboratory established that the onset of autoimmune Type 1 Diabetes is associated with the loss of islet HS. By localizing HS at subcellular levels, my project will help advance our understanding of the novel role of HS in islet biology.

To examine the subcellular localization of HS, the main technique I have been using is electron microscopy. I previously used a normal optical microscope in the histology class in my third year, but an electron microscope is to-

tally different from an optical microscope, and it takes much more time, effort and patience just to prepare the samples, stain the specimens, and take digital photographs.

My studies have been difficult because I have had to optimize the conditions for staining and this delayed the final experiments. My work here requires a lot of patience, but I think it is challenging at the same time, and I hope I can find the optimal conditions in the last month after all my hard work. Despite all the difficulties, I am most grateful to the tremendous support from Charmaine, Cathy and the other lab members.

Almost every day I have a short discussion with Charmaine about the progress of my project, and I greatly appreciate her intellectual input and constructive feedback. I have always been impressed with her great ideas and I enjoy the stimulating conversation



The Post Graduate Students Ball, an Australian bonenkai.

with her as it encourages me to approach my research from a new perspective.

After work in the lab, I took part in a lot of activities. For example, I went to the Australian flower festival Floriade, the Nara candle festival, a Halloween party, a laboratory picnic, and a friend's birthday party. I had more activities planned before I return to Japan, and I knew that I can enjoy the rest of my time in Canberra a lot.

I have had a really good time, and I am very satisfied with it. I can't believe that I was so worried about studying abroad before leaving Japan. I want to say to younger students that the things we fear are often not so hard to deal with after all. I'm sure studying abroad gives us much more rewarding and precious experiences rather than difficulties. Why don't you try bracing yourself and putting yourself in a new world whenever you can?

Report 09  
**Studying at Seinajoki University of Applied Sciences in Finland**



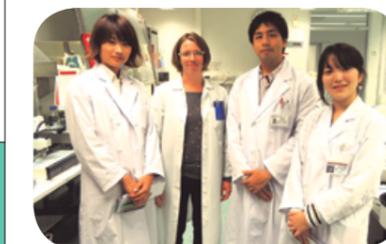
**A. Yoshikawa, C. Hayashi**  
3rd year students, Faculty of Medicine  
Study program in Finland



**Written by Ayane Yoshikawa**  
3rd year student, Nursing Science  
I went to Seinajoki University of Applied Sciences for three weeks with my classmate, Kyoko Kawakami. The weather was very beautiful, providing a

contrast between the blue sky and white buildings. In Finland, I studied nursing, visited hospitals, learned about the culture from my host family, and took part in lots of other activities.

As a nursing student, I joined the nurs-



From left; Nakamura, Ikoma and Hayashi at the Pathology Laboratory in Central Hospital.

ing lessons and discussed the question "What kind of person do you want to work with as a nurse?" with the other students. I think most of the opinions would be the same in Japan.



Studying at the Central Hospital.

For example, they would say, a worker who is skillful, able to adapt to different situations, and reliable. It was interesting that one of the Finnish students wrote her name on the paper, meaning to say that she's the type of person everyone would want to work with. A Japanese student would never do that. I also went to see how medical technologists work at the hospital. I was not able to understand much about their work, but working as a member of medical team was a valuable experience.

The interior of the hospital was very colorful and comfortable. There were spaces to relax in every ward. There were rocking chairs and pictures on the walls, so people enjoyed being there. Finnish people value individual space, but they love to talk to each other in this space.

I also had a chance to stay with a host family for one weekend. The food was very different from Japan. There were many kinds of bread and cheese, all of which came in huge sizes. I realized that in Japan we are fortunate to have so many different types of food compared to Finland.



Lecture from Ms. Helli Kitiñoja at SeAMK.

Staying in Finland was very exciting. Time moves very comfortably and the people were very nice. Someday, I want to go back there. Finally, I would like to thank everybody who supported me during my study visit to Finland.

**Written by Chikako Hayashi**

**3<sup>rd</sup> year student, Medical Technology**

From August 8 to September 15, 2013, we participated in the program at Seinajoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) in Finland. I studied with other two students of medical technology, Hayato Ikoma and Ayaka Nakamura. The purpose of my visit was to learn about the Finnish health care system and culture.

Through this program, we studied a lot of things and it was a wonderful experience for me. During the program, we visited a food laboratory and clinical laboratories.

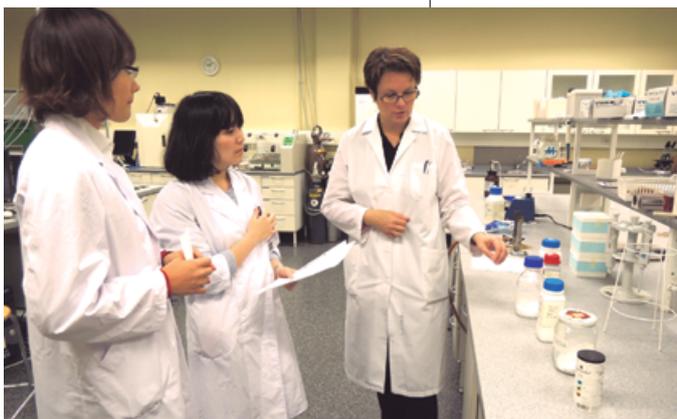
First we learned about research concerning lactobacillus at a food laboratory. It's a microbe which is found in food. We also went to the Seinajoki Central Hospital. We visited the laboratories of five different departments—Chemistry,

Physiological, Microbiology, Pathology and Neurophysiology.

The systems and methods used are not very different from Japan, but I did discover one major difference. Compared with Japan, there are many women working in hospitals and laboratories in Finland. This is because Finnish citizens pay higher taxes to support substantial social welfare. Improving social welfare supports many women and makes it easy for them to work.

We also stayed with Finnish families at the weekend. Through this homestay, I experienced Finnish culture and daily life. Furthermore I had an opportunity to show my hosts some aspects of Japanese culture. I learned many things of the differences between two countries, which I found very interesting. Both Finnish and Japanese culture have their merits.

Finally, thanks to the support I received from everyone, I was able to enjoy many good experiences. I enjoyed the program even though I had never been abroad before. I would like to express my gratitude to everybody for their support.



We studied about lactobacillus at a food laboratory.



Homestay with a family.