

Reports of TMDU Students in the World

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.



Trip to Tasmania



Ken Matsushita

5th year student,
School of Medicine

The First Step to Studying Medicine in Foreign Countries

When I was a fourth-year student, I had the great opportunity to visit Australia for six months to do basic research. I would like to share my experience here.

During that stay, I was assigned to Thomas Preiss' laboratory, in the Department of Genome Sciences in the John Curtin School of Medical Research (JCSMR), which is an institute composed of more than 40 laboratories, as part of the Australian National University.

My project was to reveal the genomic mechanism by which specific molecules work in a hypertrophic heart. Hypertrophy is a

histological change seen in heart failure. The laboratory extracted a specific molecule from a Chinese herb conventionally used for patients with heart failure to identify its effects on a hypertrophic heart at the genetic level.

I spent a whole five months working on basic research in the field of cardiology, and this experience gave me an insight into the mission of basic scientists. In the future, I would like to work as a general or pediatric cardiologist. I am also interested in basic research in the search for new medicines to treat currently untreatable diseases. This was my first opportunity to work abroad, and I am happy to share my experiences here.

One of the biggest difficulties in my stay was the language



With TMDU students 2019



With PhD students, in front of JCSMR

barrier. Even in daily conversation, it was difficult to catch on. To make matters worse, scientific discussion requires terminology and an understanding of highly sophisticated contexts, which is difficult even in Japanese. I quickly realized that it requires specialized English to work abroad. As many of my fellow students also came from countries where people do not speak English, I had no excuse regarding the language barrier and tried to learn quickly. I hope to work abroad to study advanced techniques, either as a clinician or as a researcher, and will endeavor to improve my understanding of scientific English.

I managed to complete my experiment with the support of laboratory members. My supervisor was a German post-doctorate teacher who taught me about the project from the beginning and helped me fully grasp the concept. I was also fortunate that PhD students from India took great interest in my experiment.

I appreciate the help of the staff from TMDU and JCSMR, and everyone who supported me during my stay. Some juniors missed the chance to study abroad due to the coronavirus. I hope we will overcome this pandemic soon and juniors will have this great opportunity again.



Going to a lake in Seinäjoki



Keiko Takagi

4th year student,
School of Health Care Sciences

My Experience in Finland

From the end of August to the beginning of September 2019, I had the great opportunity to study in Seinäjoki, a small city in Finland. It was my first time studying abroad in my time at TMDU. This study program consisted of lectures at Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK), visits to medical facilities and experience of Finnish culture. Through this course, I learned about the medical situation in Finland, nursing students' lifestyle and Finnish culture. I would like to introduce these three aspects that inspired me during my stay in Finland.

First, I found that Finnish medical services were very efficient and useful. For instance, the Kanta card is available for individuals in Finland. Kanta is a national archive of health information for medical services such as hospitals and clinics in Finland. It enables medical workers to get patients' clinical recording so that they can avoid adverse drug interactions and overlap. By showing their Kanta card, people can obtain the appropriate medicines more quickly. I think technology to make medical services clear for everyone should be introduced in Japan too.

Second, I found that nursing students in Finland had more practice in the clinical setting than those in Japan. For instance, they had nursing practicums in the nursing curriculum as in Japan, but there were nursing practicum rooms in where students could learn in much more realistic medical situations than in Japan. I was surprised that nursing students in SeAMK were able to work as nurses during their vacations. After they obtained sufficient nursing studies and practicums, they can work as nurses and earn an income. I think that it helps not only students to gain nursing experience, but also nurses who have children to get vacations when their children have no school.

Finally, I found that the culture in Finland is similar to that in Japan. When Japanese students made a presentation about Japan in front of the class, I found that Finnish students were shy and hesitated to interrupt us. In their culture, it is important to show great respect to others, just like in Japan. Of course, there were some differences such as calling others by their first name and taking coffee breaks. So, although Finland and Japan are very far apart, we do have some cultural similarities.

Through this course, I learned how people in Finland are facing the aging of society. This opportunity made me rethink how I would like to tackle the same problem in Japan as a nurse. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who supported this course.



With faculty members and student tutors at Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences



At the dining hall of TMU



Minori Saito

4th year student,
School of Health Care Sciences

My Experience in Taiwan

I participated in a short-term, overseas training program in Taipei Medical University (TMU) from August 21st to 30th, 2019. I really enjoyed my stay in Taiwan and gained a lot of valuable experience. I would like to introduce three aspects of my stay that especially impressed me.

Firstly, I learned that the level of Taiwanese medical technology is equal to or higher than Japan's. I visited a clinical laboratory center and a reproductive medical center, where they use the latest equipment. Taiwan is advanced in reproductive medicine because the number of external fertilization increases, and the nation supports this procedure. It was really valuable to have a chance to look at the actual equipment they were using such as the microscopes and freezing storage containers. What surprised me most is that some medical technologists working in the clinical laboratory center were undergraduate students of the same year as me. I was impressed with the high levels of Taiwanese students and felt motivated to study.

Secondly, I took part in the laboratory work of Professor Yu-Chin Liang, who is researching the role of MCPIP3 and antiproliferative activities of ZFO36L1, ZFP36L2 in colorectal cancer. In this research, I carried out Western blotting, purification of RNA, streak culture and observation of E. coli in LB agar. I was taught by considerate graduate students who had much better techniques than me. Their skills led to accurate research and their kindness helped others to improve their technical and communicational skills. The experience was very special and unlike anything I have experienced in Japan before.

TMU has many overseas students. In my laboratory, most students were Taiwanese but they spoke English when talking with overseas students. Despite the language barrier and differences in culture, eating habits and so forth, they maintained a comfortable working environment. They discussed things with me and I really enjoyed my stay thanks to their support.

Overall, I had many invaluable experiences through this overseas

training program. I realized that communication skills in English are very important, which has further motivated me to study. I hope that my experience will be useful in my future and stimulating for others. I would like to thank all those involved in this overseas training program, the teachers who sent me, the professors and laboratory members who took care of me in Taiwan, and the students from the Taipei Medical University who kindly made contact with me.



Taipei 101 from a consulting room in the Reproductive Medical Center



Lunch with my laboratory members



Playing Thai traditional musical instrument



Kentaro Harada

4th year student,
School of Dentistry

Thai Short-Term International Exchange Face-to-Face and via the Internet

In 2018, when I was in my second year, I went to the Faculty of Dentistry, Srinakharinwirot University (SWU), Bangkok, Thailand. It was only a two-week, short-term study program, but I gained an overview of the facilities at the Faculty of Dentistry, the dentists, the dental education curriculum, and so forth. In addition to the direct insights I obtained from this program, I learned about Thai culture, the atmosphere, and the Thai lifestyle. The teachers and students at the university were keen to discuss issues during lectures and when having lunch together. Those times deepened my knowledge of the pros and cons of the Thai dental educational programs, healthcare system, and insurance. I also broadened my perspectives on the geographical and epidemiological situation not only related to oral health but also in other healthcare fields, which are also affected by the socioeconomic conditions and the religious and political situations.

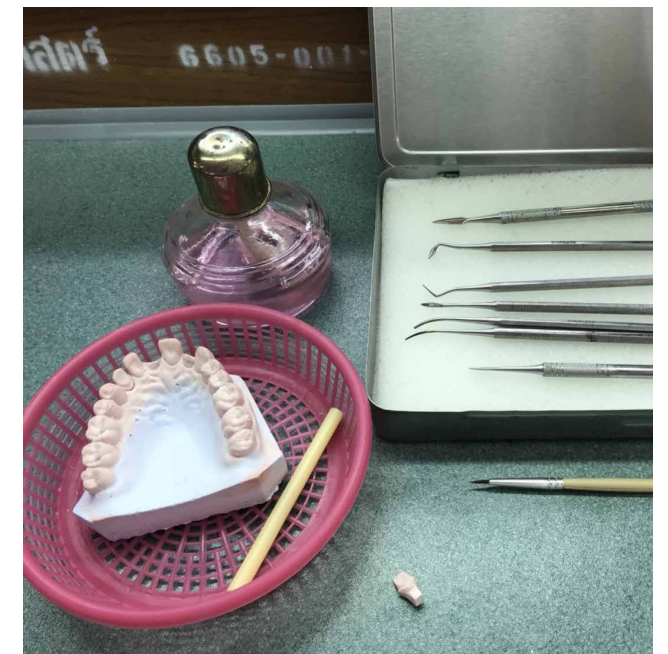
This was the first time for me to visit another country to study as a dental student, so everything was fresh and inspiring. Before studying abroad, I had never thought deeply about our dental education, oral health status, and oral health problems, but visiting Thailand led me to gain greater insight into dentistry in Japan by comparison.

The many friends and connections made during this study program were indescribably precious, expanded my future vision and mission, and promoted my international exchange with students and teachers in other countries.

One of the events this experience motivated me to participate in was the "Discussion Café with SWU and Tokyo Medical and Dental University (TMDU)" in 2020. Since COVID-19, it has become harder for those hoping to study abroad to visit other countries and to engage in international exchange. The experience in 2018 prompted me to continue on-line international exchange as one of the Discussion Café's task force members. We prepared for the Discussion Café sufficiently to enable students to take part in international exchange, including new first year students. The good news was that as many as 45 SWU and TMDU students joined the on-line Discussion Café. We mainly discussed two topics related to the changing situations under the pandemic. The topics were: changes in dental medicine/practice during and after COVID-19 and our school life after 2020. The discussions revealed that even under each country's difficult pandemic situation, many students and universities were seeking solutions to enable students to study as usual and continue their enthusiasm for studying dentistry and international exchange.



Lunch time with Faculty



Wax up practice



Suzune Noda

4th year student,
School of Oral Health Care Sciences

My Experience in Taiwan

I visited Taipei Medical University for five days from March 4th to 8th, 2019. Taipei Medical University (TMU), established in 1960, has ten specialized departments in medical care and five associated hospitals. It receives 6,000 students every year. TMU is also a research institute and has achieved many breakthroughs and innovations. The university's progress and growth in various fields such as education, research, and services, have attracted worldwide attention.

I interacted with students on the Oral Hygienist program of the College of Oral Medicine. In Taiwan, no qualification as a dental hygienist has been established, but at Taipei Medical University, oral hygiene is taught as a long-term investment for the future.

Through my participation in several classes, I realized that the systems and challenges related to dentistry differ between Japan and Taiwan due to differences in the insurance systems and the populations' age distributions. In addition, through the hospital visit, I learned that the water supply and electricity maintenance was different from that of Japan, and the structures of the systems were different.

During the training, students introduced us to local food and guided us to sightseeing spots. I experienced the atmosphere and smells of the local market and the tastes of different foods. It was a fresh and interesting experience. In addition to learning about dentistry, I greatly benefited from experiencing cultural

differences through the five-day exchange with students at Taipei Medical University.

Through this training, I learned that dental hygienists play an important role in solving dentistry and medical problems in Taiwan, which is why Taipei Medical University provides advanced education in this field. Many of the teachers have learned from the situation in Japan, where dental hygienists have already been established, and are seeking to apply this experience in Taiwan. Many of the students were keen to learn about the experiences of dental hygienists in Japan, deepen their understanding of the importance of oral hygiene and become oral hygiene specialists. I have been fortunate to be in an environment where I could learn and work in oral hygiene, and I aim to enhance my knowledge and experience as an oral health specialist.



A model tooth that I made and me



At a night market in Taiwan



With the teachers and students



Saki Nara

3rd year student,
School of Oral Health Care Sciences

An Invaluable Experience in Taiwan

I participated in an exchange program to Taiwan for 5 days from November 19th to 23rd, 2019. All 3rd year students in the Track of Oral Health Engineering attended this overseas program. In this program, I had a chance to visit Taipei Medical University and some dental laboratories. For the first time in a long time I left Japan and visited Taiwan for the first time, so everything was new and exciting. The airport, city, people, and food. I absorbed many things in a short time, and I enjoyed this overseas program.

On November 20th, I visited Taipei Medical University and they showed us around the campus and hospital. Taipei Medical University Hospital is an exceptionally large hospital. There is a department called Family Dentistry in Taiwan. I thought it was one of the things that was different from Japan. Our guide explained that if you did not know the cause of the pain and did not know which department to go to, you should go to Family Dentistry. I thought it was like General Dentistry in Japan.

During my stay in Taiwan, I visited 4 dental laboratories: Arch Dental Laboratory, Evolution Dental Laboratory, Jien-Shin Dental Laboratory, and Smilden Dental Laboratory. They welcomed us and showed us how they work in the dental laboratory. They are proactively adopting digital systems for making dental prostheses. What I noticed during the tour of the four dental laboratories in Taiwan was the high level of English proficiency of the dental technicians. I am convinced that this exchange program in another country is a wonderful experience for students who are eager to work globally in the future.

November 21st was the day for us to show our practice results for the presentation and carving. We started presentation preparation 6 months before the program. We were divided into groups and practiced English with native speakers. I gave a presentation in English with more confidence than when I was practicing. In the competition for carving skills, we competed with students from Taipei Medical University. I had a very meaningful time. There were still some points that required improvement, but I was incredibly happy and satisfied with the result. I could say I'm proud of myself for improving my carving skill further compared to what it was before by practicing my carving repeatedly for the contest.

During my spare time before the awards ceremony, I went to Taipei 101 with students from Taipei Medical University. I really enjoyed talking with Taiwanese students.

During this overseas exchange program, I was able to spend my 5 days productively because I explored not only dental technology in Taiwan, but also the Taiwanese culture. I would like to express my gratitude to all the people who supported me.



At The Carving Contest



At Taipei Medical University



Night View of Jiufen Old Street