



STUDENT EXCHANGE TRIP TO JAPAN A HUGE SUCCESS

A group of Dubbo students have recently returned from the trip-of-a-lifetime to Japan after participating in Dubbo Regional Council's (DRC) Sister City Exchange Program.

The program, which is facilitated by DRC to encourage global social and economic development at the local level, saw 10 students travel to Minokamo to participate in a range of cultural exchange activities. The students spent nine days living with a host family, attending Minokamo Agricultural High School and visiting local tourist attractions. A visit to Tokyo, including Tokyo Disneyland, was also a highlight of the experience.

The students were accompanied by chaperones Kim Rice-Harland and Stuart Harland, who said that the exchange program was life changing for students, with a definitive highlight being the time spent in the Minokamo community.

"The Minokamo Community really opened up their homes and hearts to accommodate us. Visiting the schools and being able to participate in

the class with the Japanese students was so rewarding. Playing softball, conducting science experiments and learning social studies in Japanese was so much fun. The changing of footwear from outdoor shoes to inside shoes, to toilet shoes to sport shoes throughout the day was a very unique aspect of Japanese school life,” said Kim and Stuart.

When asked about what surprised the group most about Japanese culture, Kim and Stuart said, “How it is still a cash society. Japan is such a tech savvy society, however paying by cash is still so accepted and expected, particularly in Minokamo”.

Daisy Wang, DRC’s Sister City Officer, said that the Sister City Exchange Program is a great opportunity for high school students to explore another country and appreciate different cultures in an increasingly interconnected world.

“The exchange program has been running for several years now, and the feedback from the student participants, chaperones and wider community has been fantastic. The opportunity to explore a different part of the world and a different culture is something that I’d encourage all students to apply for,” said Ms Wang.

Dubbo Regional Council’s Sister City Exchange Program will run again in 2024, and residents can email Daisy at daisy.wang@dubbo.nsw.gov.au to ensure they are notified of when applications open.

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