

The TCT study tour of the United States

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The Division of Hearing Impairment of Tsukuba College of Technology (TCT) has sent a group of its students to the United States for an annual study tour since 1992. The major aim of the tour is to allow Japanese Deaf students to socialize with their peers in America. Students have visited the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), which is an affiliate college of TCT, and Gallaudet University, as well as Niagara Falls, New York City and Washington, D.C. This report gives an outline of the tour and attempt to convey how meaningful it has become to our students.

1. The outline of the tour

The number of the days of the tour is not fixed, but it usually lasts about ten days. Table 1 shows the number of the participants on the tour, and the dates of the tour, and the cities visited.

Table 1 : The number of the participants and the itinerary of the tours

	year	number of the tourists					itinerary										
		students			fa cu lt	to- tal	dates and staying city in the States										
		m	f	sum			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	1992	7	3	10	7	17	R	R	R	R	R	R	W	W	-	-	-
2	1993	8	6	14	7	21	W	W	W	B	R	R	R	N	-	-	-
3	1994	20	12	32	2	34	W	W	W	B	R	R	R	N	LA	LA	LA
4	1995	4	5	9	4	13	R	R	R	R	R	W	W	-	-	-	-
5	1996	6	6	12	7	19	W	W	W	R	R	R	R	R	-	-	-
6	1997	8	4	12	4	16	W	W	N	R	R	R	R	R	-	-	-
7	1998	14	6	20	4	24	R	R	R	R	W	W	W	N	-	-	-
8	1999	18	12	30	5	35	W	W	W	R	R	R	R	B	-	-	-

(R:Rochester, W:Washington,D.C., B:Buffalo, N:New York, LA:Los Angeles)

The first tour was from March 23 to April 1, 1992. It was the second academic year after the founding of the college. Only first and second year students were eligible to participate. Since this was the first time the tour was organized, faculty members chose two second-year students from each of the five majors. Seven teachers volunteered to join the selected ten students to go abroad. They stayed in Rochester almost a week, and NTID accommodated the students in their dormitories, while the TCT faculty members stayed in the homes of NTID faculty members.

The tour lasted ten days. Though it takes 14 hours to fly to the States from Japan, we can arrive in the States by almost the same time on the same day as we leave Japan because of the time differential. The 9th and the 10th days were reserved for the flight back to Japan.

NTID and TCT became affiliated colleges on October 1, 1992. The second tour was from March 2 to 12, 1993. This time, any student was free to participate in the tour, and 14 students went to the States. In Rochester, they stayed at a hotel near NTID with 7 TCT faculty members.

The third tour included the West Coast, as requested by the students. This time 32 students joined the tour, while only two faculty members went with them. A planned visit to CSUN (California State University Northridge) was cancelled because of an earthquake in the Los Angeles area.

In 1994, a group consisting of some TCT and NTID faculty members got a research grant (Grant-in-aid for scientific research from the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture), including travel fees for three years from the Ministry of Education, and four faculty members went with nine students on a tour. NTID accommodated the students in their dormitories again and served three meals a day in their dining commons. Their generosity was not only helpful financially, but it also gave the students an opportunity to socialize with their peers at night and to understand different cultures on each side. By the time of the fourth trip, the general format of the tour had been settled. Table 2 shows the agenda of the fifth tour in 1996.

Table 2: The agenda of the fifth tour in 1996

No	DATE	CITY	TIME	MEANS	ACTIVITIES	NIGHT
1	03. 07. 1996 Thu.	Narita Chicago Chicago Washington	19:00 15:25 16:45 19:27	UA 882 UA 662		Plane Hotel
2	03. 08. Fri.	Washington		Bus	Gallaudet University	Hotel
3	03. 09. Sat.	Washington		Bus	Tour around Washington	Hotel
4	03. 10. Sun.	Washington New York New York Rochester	09:20 10:32 18:20 19:40	UA 6380 Bus UA 6525	Tour around New York	Hotel
5	03. 11. Mon.	Rochester Niagara Rochester		Bus	Bus tour to the Niagara Falls	Hotel
6	03. 12. Tue.	Rochester		Walk	Study at NTID	Dorm
7	03. 13. Wed.	Rochester			Study at NTID	Dorm
8	03. 14. Thu.	Rochester			Study at NTID	Dorm
9	03. 15. Fri.	Rochester Chicago Chicago	11:02 11:45 12:25	UA 1565 UA 881		Plane
10	03. 06. Sat.	Narita	16:35			

2. Activity of the students

(1) Preparatory Activity

As only a few of our students have had the experience of going abroad, most of them must begin their preparatory work by getting their passports. The students who sign up for the tour in November get together once or twice a week in December to learn about the tour. Their activity includes electing their leaders, setting the details of the travel plan, learning ASL, doing research on NTID and Gallaudet University, and getting general information about travel.

TCT faculty members exchange fax letters and e-mail with the staff at the visitor centers at Gallaudet and NTID, and they make an agenda for the students and for each faculty member, according to their requests.

(2) Activity at Gallaudet and NTID

Table 3 shows the itinerary at Gallaudet University on the fifth tour.

Table 3: The itinerary at Gallaudet University

Friday, 8 March 1996	
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.	Meeting Mr. Larry Musa International Specialist Office of Admissions EMG Memorial Building, Room 113
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Meeting Mr. Timothy Anderson Instructor English Language Institute (ELI) Hall Memorial Building, Room S-134
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch Snack Bar Ely Center or Dining Hall Agatha Hanson Plaza
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Campus Tour Mr. Scott Mohan Student Tour Guide Visitors Center
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Bookstore Ely Center, Lower Level
3:00 p.m.	Completion of the program

It is regrettable that the TCT students have visited Gallaudet at the end of the semester. They cannot meet many students at Gallaudet, and they have fewer chances to socialize with those they do meet. The University makes plans to have the TCT students meet the Japanese students who are studying there, and the ELI (English Language Institute) faculty demonstrate some of their activities and discuss the situation of the international students. The bookstore at Gallaudet is a very attractive place, where the students can buy many items, such as mugs, key holders, T-shirts and so on, with the Gallaudet logo, as well as many books on the Deaf.

The seventh tour in 1998 was our commemorative tenth anniversary tour, and it was held at the end of March. According to our request, the Gallaudet arranged an extensive program for us so that we had the opportunity to see KDES (Kendall Demonstration Elementary School), MSSD (Model Secondary School for the

Deaf), and the dormitories, too. We were able to meet a lot of students on the campus. Table 4 shows the agenda at Gallaudet in 1998.

Table 4 : Agenda at Gallaudet in 1998

Friday, 27 March 1998	
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 p.m.	Center for Global Education Dr. Donalda K. Ammons, Director Room 113 Edward Minor Gallaudet Memorial Building,
10:15 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.	English Language Institute Mr. Francisco Martinez-Cordero, Coordinator Room 113. EMG Bldg.
11:00 p.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Campus Tour Ms. Amy Novotny, Student Tour Guide
12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Lunch Snack bar or Dining Hall or Bistro
1:15 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Tour of KDES & MSSD Mr. Chad Entinger, Student Tour guide
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Bookstore Ely Center, Lower Level
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Dorm room visit Campus Life Office Ely Center, Room 132
5:00 p.m.	Meet Gallaudet Students from Japan Dining Hall, Agatha Hanson Plaza

NTID also prepared a program with variety of activities. They recruited student hosts to socialize with TCT students. These hosts guided the student guests around the campus, showing them their dorms, taking them shopping, and sometimes inviting them to their lodgings. During the last evening, a farewell party was held by the student hosts. At the same time this party was being held, the faculty members attended another party hosted by the Dean. This has often proved to be the most memorable night for the TCT students.

Table 5 shows the student agenda of the student at NTID in 1998. During the time of this tour, the dorms at NTID were being remodeled, so the college was

not able to accommodate our students.

Table 5 : The agenda of the students at NTID in 1998.

Sunday, March 22 1998	
2:49 p.m.	Arrival(NW1133) from Japan and check into the Raddison Inn
5:00 p.m.	Dinner in Grace Watson Dining Hall -escorted by Robert Baker
Monday, March 23	
9:00 a.m.	Greetings and Overview of NTID Dr. Robert Davila, Vice President for NTID and Dr. James DeCaro, Dean and Professor, NTID Lyndon Baines Johnson Building - Room 1205
10:00 a.m.	Orientation information and review of schedule Robert Baker and El Kaigler
11:00 a.m.	Tour of NTID' Lyndon Baines Johnson Building led by NTID student tour guides/and group photograph by Mark Benjamin
12:00 noon	Lunch Huttie L. Shumway Dining Commons
2:00 p.m.	Tour of the RIT Campus Student Tour Guides
4:00 p.m.	Welcome Reception Hosted by Dr. Davila Mary E. Switzer Gallery
5:30 p.m.	Dinner On Your Own in the NTID Commons
6:30 p.m.	Depart for Rock Venture Board bus in front of Johnson Building
10:00 p.m.	Return to Radisson Hotel
Tuesday March 24	
8-11:00 a.m.	For TCT Students & Faculty interested in Architectural Engineering: Architectural Engineering Laboratory -LBJ, Room 1440
8-9:00 a.m.	For TCT Students & Faculty interested in Information Science/ Electronics (NTID Applied Computer Technology) Choice of: -Introduction to Business Programming, OR: -Networking, Aristotle Ogoke OR: -C Plus Plus Program, James Mallory
9-10:00 a.m.	For TCT Students & Faculty interested in Information Science/ Electronics (NTID Applied Computer Technology)

tour and Overview of the Applied Computer Technology Programs
 8:45-10:00 a.m. Class Observation in NTID Applied Art and Computer Graphics
 Lunch Shumway Dining Commons - On your own
 2-3:00 p.m. For ALL TCT Students and any interested TCT faculty members
 Electronic Printing and Publishing Demonstration and Overview
 5-5:45 p.m. For ALL TCT Faculty and Students
 CUSeeMe Demonstration between TCT
 5:45-6:45 p.m. Dinner on your own, NTID Dining Commons
 6:45 p.m. Board bus for shopping at Eastview Mall
 9:00 p.m. Bus departs Eastview Mall for return to Raddison Hotel

Wednesday, March 25

8-11:00 a.m. For TCT Students & Faculty interested in Architectural Engineering:
 Architectural Drafting Laboratory
 9-10:00 a.m. For TCT Students & Faculty interested in Information Science/
 Electronics: Overview and Demonstration in NTID Learning Center
 Lunch NTID Dining Commons - On your own
 1-2:00 p.m. All TCT Students - observation: Business/Computer Science support
 Class/Lab
 2:00-5:30p.m. Free Time for All TCT Students
 5:30 p.m. Dinner- NTID Dining Commons
 8-10:00 p.m. TCT Students and Faculty
 Dress Rehearsal of NTID Dance Performance: A Tribute to Michael
 Thomas - LBJ, Panara Theatre
 10:00 p.m. TCT Students
 Farewell Party with NTID Students

Thursday, March 26

TCT Bus meets group at Radisson Inn for trip to Niagara Falls and Buffalo

NTID arranged several courses well-suited to the majors and interests of our students. They arranged several meetings and events for the faculty members that matched our interests, too. We considered it a great honor that the Vice President for the NTID and the Dean of NTID personally hosted the welcome reception for us all.

3. Meaning of the tour

Through the various programmed activities, the students are able to exchange their culture and ideas with each other. The main effects are :

1. The TCT students understand Deaf culture more deeply.
2. The TCT students become confident in their communicative competence, because they can communicate better than they expected.
3. The TCT students become more active as they study and prepare for their visit. They also plan and carry out the report meeting on their own initiative.

There is a big effect from direct international contact on the Deaf students. We hope there will be more links developed, including those with other Asian Deaf youth.

4. Problems to be solved

We hope the study tour will continue as a formal college event. There are some problems to be solved in the program, such as the following:

1. Written English, as well as ASL, is an important means for communication between Japanese and American Deaf students. Our students should continue to learn how to express themselves to others. We believe that a distant learning system would serve to solve this problem.
2. We would like to consider inviting students to visit our institution from abroad, but we don't have sufficient facilities for accommodation. We wish we could welcome the students from abroad as a part of a study tour in Japan. We would like to develop tour programs similar to those we have experienced at Gallaudet and NTID.
3. The study tour shouldn't serve only as a one-time experience, but it should be an entrance to the world-wide Deaf culture. We should encourage our students to continue to develop relationships with other countries. In fact, some of the students have continued to exchange e-mail with the friends they made during the tours. They feel happy that they are able to make good use of modern media in this fashion.