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Linfield College: Study Abroad in Japan

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Brittani Drost

My study abroad experience to Yokohama, Japan for an entire semester meant a great deal to me. It was the end-point of years of daydreaming and careful planning. I had always wanted to study abroad and one of my defining reasons for why I chose Linfield was because of its Japanese and study abroad program. It was by no means disappointing.

The experience enriched my life in many defining ways. I met many wonderful people who I want to stay in contact with for years to come. My host family, especially, holds a special place in my heart. I look forward to when I can see my three little host sisters again. The interactions I had with the Japanese people taught me cultural sensitivity and how to appreciate both the differences and similarities between the United States and Japan. By going abroad, I better understood how the world was connected.

My appreciation for language also became well-developed because of my experience. My struggles and successes with Japanese increased my passion for learning and communication. I even began to better understand how English worked as well as the nuances of human expression, in general.

Ultimately, my experience changed me for the better. I find my patience has increased with conversations; I have become both a better speaker and listener, including in English. I am more inclined to seek out social opportunities and appreciate the people in my life. It has eroded my fear of travel and trying new things. In other words, I now find getting lost and strange foods to be an opportunity for discovery! Overall, I am so glad that I chose to study abroad and I hope that the future has more opportunities for travel like Linfield has offered during my undergraduate years.