

# JETAADC's Dinner with the Kakehashi Program

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February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 from 6:00pm-7:30pm  
The Advisory Board Company Offices  
Total grant: \$300



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### Working with Youth for Understanding

JETAADC was approached by staff from Youth for Understanding, an international student exchange program, to host an event for Japanese university students visiting the US through the Kakehashi Project. The Kakehashi Project is a fully-funded, large-scale youth exchange program between Japan and the United States. Youth for Understanding wanted JETAADC members to talk to the students about their experience living in Japan and how their lives are connected to Japan after returning back to the United States. The students were from Meiji University and met with JETAADC as part of a series of cultural events held for them in the Washington, D.C. area.

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### Planning the Dinner

JETAADC worked with Youth for Understanding to pinpoint a day and time that would fit into the students' schedule. JETAADC also applied for a \$300 grant through Sasakawa USA that was administered by USJETAA to help offset the cost of food. To recruit volunteers, JETAADC emailed their member listserv and recruited 14 people to attend the dinner including 1 friend of JET, 1 former Kakehashi participant (not a JET) and 12 JETAADC members.

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### The Dinner!

The students and volunteers arrived at 6:00pm and immediately started chatting about life in Japan. Dinner was served at 6:10 and everyone enjoyed tacos from Qdoba. For some students, this was their first time having tacos. During dinner, students and volunteers talked, laughed and shared stories. Around 6:30, three JETAADC members gave PowerPoint presentations about their time as an ALT or CIR. Their stories were very unique including living in Okinawa and taking a boat to school, being a two-time JET and living in Fukushima after the earthquake. The presenters also shared what they do now and how their lives are connected to Japan after being on the JET Program. There was also a presentation by John Tobe, the president of the Japanese American Citizens League, who will be taking a US Kakehashi group to Japan in March 2017. After the presentations, everyone enjoyed a uniquely American dessert—cupcakes! The cupcakes were a big hit with the students.

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### Feedback and Next Steps

The students really enjoyed their time with the JETAADC volunteers and found it interesting to talk to people who had lived in Japan and knew Japanese culture. This was the second year JETAADC hosted a dinner for the Kakehashi Project and JETAADC hopes to continue that tradition each year with a new group of students. Youth for Understanding also brought Japanese university students to help as volunteers to JETAADC's Japan Day in December 2016 so JETAADC is looking forward to continuing a strong partnership with them.