



Lance David Ambrocio
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<Programs to have participated>

“Japanese Language Program Winter 2016” hosted by
Japanese Language Education Center, Meiji University

My name is Lance David Ambrocio, an undergraduate student from the College of Architecture in the University of the Philippines Diliman, taking up Landscape Architecture. I had the most exciting opportunity to be a part of Meiji University’s Japanese Language Winter Program last February. The two weeks program may seem short, but it was jam-packed with amazing experiences that I will never forget.

Q1. The reason/purpose of studying in Japan

Ever since I was a young boy, I’ve been fascinated by Japanese animation and manga. I’m especially fond of Studio Ghibli films, and I love reading works by manga artists such as Urasawa Naoki and Watase Yuu. Wanting to be able to watch anime and read manga without subtitles and translations, and being able to understand the cultural context of the stories drove me to start



studying Japanese by myself. This early interest in Japan urged me to join a Japanese-Philippines friendship organization at my university which has further expanded my horizons about Japan and has helped me create lasting friendships with Japanese students from various universities. Their experiences as an exchange student in the Philippines

inspired me to want to study in Japan as well.

During my studies in Landscape Architecture, I learned all about the unique design principles of a traditional Japanese garden, one that would be impossible to recreate without any knowledge of the Japanese culture and psyche. This has always filled me with awe with how every space has a psychological purpose and every element of the design is arranged to appear as natural as it should be, everything in perfect balance. I wanted to see these gardens for myself, and this is one of the reasons why I really wanted to study in Japan.

Q2. The reason/purpose of your participation in Meiji University Japanese Language Program in Winter

I have many Japanese friends who keep telling me incredible stories about their experiences as an exchange student here in the Philippines, and they urged me to try applying for a short program at Meiji University so that I can experience the feeling of being an exchange student in Japan too. I also wanted to further improve my Japanese skills, as I am capable of holding an everyday conversation in Japanese, but not in a professional setting. So, I decided to apply.

Q3. About what you felt/got/learnt by participating in this program

Being in Japan was an awesome experience! I was able to master how the Japanese train system worked (after getting myself lost in process) and it was just the most amazing transportation system that I've ever been on. I was able to share in the lives of my homestay family, who were so extremely kind and helpful. Everyday spent with them was a treasured memory, and I really miss them right now. I am very grateful for the kindness and hospitality that they have shown me.

Learning Japanese was a big challenge for me, especially since I've been put in the Intermediate Level class. It seemed that everyone was already well-versed in Japanese and was able to read some difficult kanji. This was my challenge since I really do not read or write kanji. However, with the help of my teachers and the encouragement from my classmates, I was able to keep up with everyone and enjoy the learning experience.

I was also exposed to the rich Japanese culture through the various activities such as, furoshiki and kitsuke. I wore a kimono and hakama, and got to walk around the streets of Ochanomizu like a samurai! The lovely and helpful student supporters also showed us around Tokyo, and I was just awestruck with all the sights and the delicious Japanese food that I got to savor. In addition to that, Akihabara, which is an area filled with Japanese anime and manga, is just one station away from Meiji University! So I can say that I now know every street and store in Akihabara.



Q4. About your future plan/dream

In the future, I plan to return to Japan to study more Japanese and work in an architecture firm. I want to know more about Japanese designs and help create beautiful spaces that people can enjoy. I also want to see if I can apply as an artist in some animation studios, such as Kyoto Animation when I get better at my craft. I am also thinking of maybe becoming a mangaka and start creating my own manga, I already have a story for it! Whatever the future holds, I want my future to be in Japan, a place where anything is possible.

Visit <http://www.meiji.ac.jp/cip/english/programs/mjlp/index.html> for more information on Japanese Language Program by Japanese Language Education Center, Meiji University.