Ella St George Carey - Technos International Week Report 2019

After travelling for nearly 24 hours, Charlie, Laura, George, Brian and I arrived in Tokyo. Any jet lag we were feeling quickly vanished with the warmth of our reception by Technos students. Their enthusiasm for the exchange was catching and pretty soon we were chatting animatedly in the arrivals lounge as we waited for our sister schools from the USA and New Zealand to arrive.

The two weeks in Japan were among the best (and busiest!) of my life. The kindness and generosity of the Technos students and staff alike was unparalleled in my experience. We did so much and forged so many meaningful connections it is difficult to know where to start describing the week – so here are some of the highlights/ snapshots:

We were exceedingly lucky to get a clear view of Mount Fuji, one of the most iconic sites in the world. Normally obscured by clouds (as the locals say “Fuji is shy”), it was a clear, sunny day when we visited, and we were awed by the mountains majesty and beauty. It was definitely something to tick off my bucket list. In this photo you can see all the sister school participants and selected Technos students. The base of Mount Fuji is very busy as one would expect so we kept together as a group with those fetching green team t shirts.

As I mentioned above, the lasting legacy of the trip for me will not only be the amazing memories but also the friendships generated across language, country and culture. This photo was taken at Mido No Mura, a hostel spa a few hours outside of Tokyo. The students had just given us a workshop on Japanese bath culture and etiquette as well as teaching us how to correctly wear a yukata (浴衣) (pictured above), which is a casual summer kimono usually made of cotton. In the photo with me is Kiora, the student president of the Technos organising committee. Not only was she super hilarious but her dedication to the ideology of Technos IW and commitment to this years’ theme of ‘Roots’ was clear and infectious.
We also went to Kamakura (home of the Giant Buddha) for a day trip. The city was beautiful, set in nature and filled with blooming hydrangeas it was a nice change from the cosmopolitan hustle and bustle of Tokyo. This is me with a couple of the teachers and students from Technos College.

A new activity this year was the Technos Tokyo scavenger hunt. Divided into groups we were each allocated a region of Tokyo to travel to. Once there we had to race to tick off all the items on a list we were given. An animal was on the list hence my team with this kind gentleman and his lovely dog. This enabled us all to explore the less famous areas of Tokyo as well as bonding us closer together with the Technos students in our group over a shared goal.

In his speech commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Tanaka Ikueikai Educational Foundation, Dr. Kenji Tanaka, Honorary Chairman and creator of Technos International Week commented: “With my experience of war, I could not help but strongly wish for the next generation of young people to deepen mutual understanding across national borders and to obtain wisdom that allows them to lead society to peace without being bound by the misunderstandings and stereotypes that arise from historic and cultural differences.” My experience of Technos international week has left me with a distinct sense that Dr Tanaka’s (Rest in Peace) dream of cross-cultural understanding has become a reality. I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the man himself and everyone who worked so hard for so long to make sure the trip was such a resounding success for all those involved.