Technos International Trip report – Harriet Loney

This June I was lucky enough to represent Pembroke College during Technos International Week in Japan.

In my report I am going to summarise a few of my favourite experiences – including trips, people we met, classes I took. Many more experiences I have not included in this report will be included in our powerpoint presentation.

I learned a lot from the trip and it’s hard to put some of what I got out of experience into words. The welcoming ceremony felt almost out-of-this-world, with cameras filming us, students interviewing us and crowds of students filling the college and cheering for us - I felt like a celebrity. From this experience onwards the hospitality of the Japanese students was one of the most striking things I will take back with me and I only hope that I can make my international friends feel the way I did when we meet again.

Bridal class
I had no idea what to expect from bridal class. When we arrived we were greeted by a huge group of overly excited students. On arrival they gave us a gift of an intricately-designed fan, something I came to greatly appreciate immediately after being wrapped up in layers and layers of fabric. We were allowed to choose a kimono to wear. I chose a stunning red one. The fabric was very thick and heavy and had several undergarments and I could only imagine how a bride would feel wearing this for an entire hot, humid day.

After this, we were able to try on a less traditional white wedding dress which some brides choose to wear. I was squeezed into it, had my make-up and hair done and taken for a photo-
shoot. This experience made me realise how amazing all of the Japanese students were at treating their guests and how thoughtful and kind they were.

**Mt. Fuji**

One of my favourite trips was a visit to Mt. Fuji in Honshu Island. On the bus trip we were each sat next to a Technos student. One of the reasons behind this was for us to try to communicate, which I found very challenging with my little knowledge of the Japanese language and my partners limited ability to speak English. We began to pick up words from each other, one of my favourite was ‘oishii’ which means delicious, a word we picked up on as we shared some Japanese candy. We also used pictures on our phones to show each other our families and lifestyles, which were strikingly different. After a few hours everyone on the bus turned to face to the left and the sight of Mt. Fuji in the distance is something I will never forget. At 3,776.24 m the mountain peaked out from the clouds and was mesmerising. We later visited the 5th station which is the highest point you can reach by bus. For about a minute interval the dense clouds separated and the peak of the mountain became visible.