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Freeman Asia Internship Program

Summer 2018

World Friendship Center, Hiroshima, Japan

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IWU Freeman Asia-- World Friendship Center, Hiroshima, Japan

Ziyao (Mirabelle) Chen / Illinois Wesleyan University

WORLD FRIENDSHIP CENTER

The WFC is a place where people from many nations can meet, share their experiences and reflect on peace. It also serves as a place where the hibakushas (A-bomb victims) can share their experience, tell their story and often offer their vision and work for peace and forgiveness to visitors from around the world.

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

More than seven decades ago, an atomic bomb devastated an entire city. Now, Hiroshima has risen from the ruins and become a popular place where millions of people come and visit from all around the world.

HIGHLIGHT EVENTS

- Hibakushas testimonies and stories
- Peace Park Personal Guided Tour
- Schmoe House Guide
- A-bomb trees tour
- Miyajima Shrine tour
- countless ramen and oyster restaurants



MY MAIN JOBS

- Setting up breakfast table every morning
- Communicating with guests and helping with needs
- Attending board meeting and participating in annual budgeting & recent activity planning
- Going to Shudo University, Hiroshima and assisting with English class
- Visiting Peace Culture Village and spreading peace culture in the area, at the same time attending peace-educational activities, ex. rice planting, peace talks.
- Helping out at Hummingbird café with menu making,

MY RESEARCH PROJECT

The topic of my summer research project is "what brings people to WFC and Hiroshima, and what helped the hibakushas (the A-bomb affected victims) to go through the hardest time and to regain hope".

After several interviews with the hibakushas, I learned that it's their hope and responsibilities they felt to bring a peaceful, loving and nuclear-free future.

They're willing to share their experience, show their scars and hopefully by doing so, the listeners would go back to where they're from and tell more people about their stories.

THINGS LEARNT

- **Professionally**-- After investing substantial time and energy into learning about the bombings and listening to the stories of hibakushas, I was profoundly moved and educated. In war, the moment of a bombing is clearly devastating; However, I was most horrified to learn about the compounding effects of radiation sickness upon those who initially survived.

- **Personally**-- Due to several reasons, I was the only intern at the site and had the chance to live in a completely new city by myself. I learned to communicate well and work with people who I meet for the first time, people who don't speak the same language as me. I also made lifelong friends during the 6 weeks which I'll be forever grateful to.

