

New York Program report      Reina Yamamoto

I applied to this program because I saw it is a rare and great opportunity to experience American medicine and culture first hand. I was worried about my English skills, but I wanted to broaden my horizon so I decided to apply.

<English lessons at PACE University>

On the first three days, we had English lessons at Pace University. We practiced medical interviews and role played doctors, medical assistants, and patients. Janis, our English teacher and also a nurse, gave us much advice about pronunciation and basic grammar. It was difficult for me to conduct the medical interview in English in front of everyone, but I was able to perform and feel more prepared for the upcoming Simulation training which followed.

< Medical interview simulation with the simulated patients>

We did medical interviews with SPs(「Simulated Patients」 or 「Standardized Patients」) at The Simulation studio. We had 10 minutes to take a medical interview, and 5 minutes for feedback. We experienced 10 cases in two days. The last day, we performed the physical examination. As a resident, I had experienced the medical interview many times in Japan, but it was so difficult in English that I remembered when I first conducted medical interviews in Japan. I learned that we should express sympathy not only with our words but also with body language and facial expression. Absolutely this is also important in Japan, but patients in America ask doctors for partnership even more. Patients participate in the treatment proactively and they are recognized as equal partners.

Medical students in America practice medical interview simulation since their 1st year and do more complicated cases. (For example, the case that we did treatment based on incorrect diagnosis and then we should talk about that to the patient.) Feedback with videos is a very good way to know how a patient was impacted by my words. Students will be assessed not by what sympathetic words they use but rather how SPs feel by these words. I think partnership is more important in American medicine.

<Research Lab visits>

We visited two research labs in NYC. One was Dr. Morishita's Lab at Mt. Sinai, and the other was Dr. Lyden's Lab at Cornell University. Dr. Morishita Lab studies the mechanisms of experience-dependent brain plasticity during critical period. Dr. Hoshino in Dr. Lyden's Lab studies tumor exosome which determine organotropic metastasis. Both of their studies were really interesting for me. I found that in America, it is easier to start collaborating with other specialties and they can achieve a good outcome sooner than in Japan. Also, I heard that it is important not to stop questioning even if something is common sense. I hadn't been interested in research so much, but after visiting the labs, I have become more interested.

<shadowing>

We did shadowing two or three days thanks to JMSA. I visited OBGYN clinic for two days.

In America, doctors go to an examination room and there is no curtain between a doctor and a patient when performing a pelvic examination. That is different from Japan. Patients said that it would be much scarier if they could not see the doctor the examination. On the 2nd day, I attended an obstetrics conference in NYU in the morning. Residents presented cases and very active debate was held among teachers. That was impressive for me.

I had many wonderful experiences and meeting in two weeks. I saw only part of American medicine and research, but I think I could broaden my horizon. Especially, I discovered that I should be less self conscious about my English skills and understand that communication in English is important.

I joined this program as a Kanazawa University member, so I could have a valuable experience.

Some 5th year student members want to be researchers, and others are doing research, so they helped me when we prepared for the lab visit before going to NYC. To visit Labs with them was a stimulating experience.

I really appreciate Kanazawa University, Professor Schneider, my colleagues and all of the people who supported this program. Thank you very much. This is the second time for residents to participate in the program, and only two residents joined. I highly recommend this program to residents and I hope it will continue. I intend to use what I learned in the NYC program here in Japan.