



# Local Sessions



One of the best features of the Grassroots Summit is the “local sessions (homestay program).”

In Oita, the local sessions will start on July 9th for 4 days and 3 nights. The participants will experience person-to-person exchange and the unique local culture with their host families. There are 11 local session areas in Oita.

You can choose 2 preferred areas on your application form, however, it cannot be guaranteed that you will be placed in one of these areas.

## 1 Oita City

In the sixteenth century, under the protection of the Christian Daimyo(feudal lord), Otomo Sourin, Oita became a center for Christian missionaries and Western culture blossomed here. Medicine, music, and drama from the West also flourished in Oita. Oita City is now developed as a center of trade and industry, playing an important role as the largest economic heart of eastern Kyushu. It is surrounded by the beautiful Beppu Bay, and at the popular “Umi Tamago” aquarium, guests can see fun performances from dolphins, walruses and more. Visitors can also see groups of wild Japanese monkeys nearby at the Mt. Takasaki Natural Park.



### KEY PERSON



My name is Hitoshi Hashimoto and I am the promotional chairperson of the Oita Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Since 1990, Oita City has enjoyed a sister city relationship with Austin, Texas, U.S.A, and the two cities enjoy a deep friendship. I hope that all participants in this summit enjoy a wonderful experience in Oita City. We are all waiting to welcome you.

## 2 Usuki City

Usuki is home to the Usuki Stone Buddhas. They were carved into the cliff face about one thousand years ago and are national treasures. Many people come to visit these statues. Furthermore in Usuki’s urban areas, surrounding a sixteenth-century castle are Buddhist temples dating from the Edo Period, samurai residences, and many old merchants’ houses (machiya). Looking at the view from the castle ruins is like going back in time to the Edo Period. Modern Usuki is famed for its “miso” and “soy sauce” production, but the area is also known for fishing and farming. For these reasons and more, there are many Japanese restaurants in Usuki, and visitors from all over Japan come to eat the delicious Japanese food here.



### KEY PERSON



My name is Kensuke Ono and I am the vice president of the Usuki Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In a town like this, I hope that you will fully experience Japanese culture, and make many wonderful memories here. We are currently making plans to enable you to interact and have cultural exchanges with Usuki residents. We hope that you are looking forward to seeing them!

### 3 Tsukumi City

Tsukumi is a port city made up of interweaving orange fields and a unique sawtooth-shaped coastline.

It is famous for being a cement town, being one of Japan's prominent producers of limestone deposits. Furthermore, Tsukumi is a city of many charms, such as our traditional fan dance that has been performed for roughly 450 years, and opportunities to interact with dolphins.

We truly hope that our American guests taking part in the summit will fully enjoy Tsukumi City's nature and culture.



#### KEY PERSONS



We are Rina Futamura (left) and Ikushiro Harajiri (right). We are greatly looking forward to meeting you all and spending time with you all. Let's all experience Tsukumi's culture together!

### 4 Saiki City

In 2005, the former Saiki City absorbed eight of the surrounding towns and became the city in Kyushu with the largest total area. Old castle towns, as well as mountain, sea and river towns, became one, meaning that in Saiki City one can enjoy a variety of sights, and also taste a rich variety of foods. Why don't you spend the deep summer, energetically moving through the ocean, or experiencing the gentle mountain air, or taking a leisurely stroll around a quiet castle town? I assure you that all of the various delights of the Japanese summertime can be experienced in Saiki.



#### KEY PERSON



My name is Toru Yamamoto and I am the vice president of the Saiki City Chamber of Industry and Commerce. Please look forward to the people of Saiki welcoming you all from the bottom of their hearts. We are looking forward to seeing you.

### 5 Taketa City

Taketa City is located in the south-west of Oita Prefecture, roughly in the center of Kyushu. It is surrounded by the mountains that Kyushu is well-known for: the Kuju mountain range, Mt. Aso, and the Sobo-Katamuki mountain range, and is an area rich in nature with water and greenery. Visitors will be delighted by the famous ever-flowing water of Taketa, Taketa's food which is borne of Taketa's rich nature and history, Nagayu Onsen, Japan's best carbonated onsen (hot spring) and the vast Kuju Highlands that give one a sense of openness. Furthermore, there are the Oka Castle Ruins, made famous by the music "The Moon over the Ruined Castle," and in the castle town there are many old samurai residences and other historical buildings.



#### KEY PERSON



My name is Kiyoko Hada and I am the vice president of the Okajo Historical Town Planning Society. I am looking forward to meeting you all in the castle town which is rich in nature and history.

## 6 Hita City

Hita City is surrounded by beautiful mountains (Aso, the Kuju mountain range and the Hiko mountain range), and the town is blessed by the wonderful water that flows from these mountain ranges. On summer nights, many Japanese houseboats float on the Mikuma River, and we invite you all to this enchanting world. Furthermore, from the olden days, Hita has flourished as an important place bringing together traffic from all over northern Kyushu. In the Edo period, the region prospered as the Saigokusuji County - an imperial fiefdom directly controlled by the Edo Shogunate, and so was the center of Kyushu's governmental, economic and cultural worlds. Even now this reputation remains unchanged, and the area is known as "Little Kyoto."



Houseboats on Mikuma River



Kangien Old Private Academy

### KEY PERSON



I am Kiyoshi Sakuragi. I have been operating an English language cram school for around 30 years. Every summer we run a program called "A Summer Adventure in Hita," during which American Students and local elementary & middle school pupils are able to meet, make friends, and experience all the charms of Hita. Hita is often called "Little Kyoto of Kyushu." I hope you will come to our town and experience traditional Japanese culture here.

## 7 Nakatsu City

Nakatsu is famed for its connection to Fukuzawa Yukichi, whose portrait is featured on the ¥10,000 bank notes (Fukuzawa visited the U.S. along with John Manjiro in 1860). There are culturally important and historical buildings in the city, such as Nakatsu Castle and the former home of Fukuzawa. Nakatsu is also home to the famed scenic area, Yabakei, and rich in seafood (the conger eel is particularly famed). Its mountainous regions are home to shitake mushrooms, Bungo-beef, peaches, pears, green tea and lumber. Furthermore, Nakatsu is famous throughout Japan for its "Heavenly Kara-Age (Japanese fried chicken)".



Nakatsu Castle



The Former Home of Fukuzawa

### KEY PERSONS



We are the vice presidents of the Nakatsu City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Tadashi Hosokawa (left) and Kiyosi Takemoto (right). Our city was the castle town established approximately 400 years ago by the famous Edo period military commander, Kuroda Kanbei. With its gorgeous scenery, and famous delicacies of the mountain and sea, Nakatsu is waiting to warmly welcome you all.

## 8 Usa City

Usa City hosts the Usa-Jingu Shrine, which was designated a national treasure and is the head Shrine of the Hachimon shrines, of which there are approximately 40,000 in Japan, and many people from all over Japan come to visit this shrine. There are also many other historical and cultural treasures that are really worth seeing, such as Ajimu, which attracts many tourists, the stone bridge, and the Yuzu citrus production center. Usa is a place with many charms. We warmly welcome all of you! Please enjoy Usa's 1,500 year history and natural landscape.



The Stone Bridge



Usa Jingu Shrine

### KEY PERSON



My name is Hisako Nishioka. Every other year, I take part in homestay exchange events and educational exchange with people from foreign countries. Additionally, I also run a cultural exchange business and English conversation classes, and by next year will have been doing that for 20 years. I am really looking forward to meeting you all in our town which is steeped in history and culture, and hope that we can have a good international exchange.

## 9 Bungo-Takada City

Bungo-Takada is a city that is alive with history. For thousands of years it has enjoyed a rich cultural atmosphere that interweaves beautiful nature with the culture and history of the Rokugo Manzan temples. Bungo-Takada is a place where you can truly come to understand and to experience history through the old town streets and the cultural events. Beginning with the city center, which has been revitalized and is full of energy, the Fukiji Temple (a national treasure), and the scenery of the Tashibu rural area have particularly utilized their charms, and due to the efforts of the many people of this region, you can experience the charms of this newly re-born city.



Fukiji Temple



Showa Town

### KEY PERSON



My name is Yoji Noda of the Bungo-Takada Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Many tourists come to visit the "Showa Town" area of Bungo-Takada, and I'm extremely pleased to welcome you all there. We in Bungo-Takada are looking forward to meeting you all.

## 10 Kitsuki City

Kitsuki City is located in the north-east of Oita Prefecture, in the southern part of the Kunisaki Peninsula, an area known as "Hotoke no Sato", which literary means "hometown of Buddha". It is a place blessed with abundant nature, possessing both verdant mountainous regions and a beautiful coastline. There are a wide variety of natural products in the region that have been cultivated by this nature, such as Bungo beef, Yamaga rice, and greenhouse-grown oranges from the mountains, as well as conger eels, dried sardines, and oysters from the sea.



Suyano-Saka



Kitsuki Castle

### KEY PERSON



My name is Hironobu Tsuchiya. I am fifty-one years old. My only daughter is currently a university student in Tokyo, and so my wife and I live in this town together while managing a DIY store. So far, we have hosted students from the U.S., Germany, Norway and Slovenia. We are looking forward to welcoming you to our hometown, Kitsuki.

## 11 Beppu City

Beppu city is Japan's best place for onsen (hot springs). Views of great steam plumes rising into the air are symbols of the city, and citizens here are very kind and friendly.

Also, Beppu is proud of having the highest number of the international students per capita all over Japan. Approximately 3,000 international students from around 80 different countries and regions live in the city. These students devote themselves not only to their studies, but also to cultural exchange with Beppu citizens, and it is giving the international thriving atmosphere to Beppu.



The Landscape of Beppu City



Jigokumushi (Food Steamed by Hot Spring)

### KEY PERSON



My name is Fusho Yamamoto (center in the picture). I represent a volunteer international exchange group. It undertakes various activities, such as writing tourist guides for foreign visitors to Beppu, as well as running English classes for Japanese people. Through these activities we are deepening understanding between Japanese and those from other countries. We are eagerly waiting to welcome you all here in Beppu.