

study abroad Japan Summer Program



In the summer of 2009, Professor **Taeg Nishimoto**, Associate Dean for Research, Outreach and Graduate Studies of the College of Architecture, led a group of nine graduate and senior UTSA College of Architecture students on 19-day study abroad program to Japan. The itinerary included a tour of nine Japanese cities: Tokyo, Nikko, Sendai, Yokohama, Ise, Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, and Kumamoto.

During the program, students were exposed to both traditional and contemporary Japanese lifestyle, cities, space, and architecture, learning the uniqueness of the relationship between culture and the built environment in Japan. The intense urban experience of taking public transportation -- from the super-crowded subways to the bullet trains between the cities -- for daily trips was also an entirely new experience for our students. Some of the highlights of visiting the modern and contemporary architecture included the works of **Kenzo Tange**, **Toto Ito**, **Tadao Ando**, and **Yoshio Taniguchi** in various locations throughout Japan. The traditional sites included the oldest shrine in Ise, early Buddhism temples of Nara, the most sophisticated temples, shrines, and Zen gardens of Kyoto. The group also visited **Toyota Home Factory**, where the car

manufacturer produces high quality, sustainable, prefabricated houses for the Japanese market, in a completely technologically-controlled environment.

The program concluded with a visit to Kumamoto City, the sister city of San Antonio. This special visit was largely supported and arranged by City of San Antonio International Affairs Department and its director **Beth Costello**. The group was officially received by Mayor **Seishi Kohyama** of Kumamoto City in city hall, where Nishimoto presented a letter from San Antonio Mayor **Julian Castro** to Mayor Kohyama. The group also visited Kumamoto University where Dean **Mitsuo Morozumi** of the Faculty of Engineering gave a special reception for them. The students also did a home stay for two nights with volunteering families in Kumamoto, which was arranged by the City of Kumamoto Citizens' Affairs Bureau; Ms. **Sayoko Hara**, Director. The students experienced the real Japanese lifestyle and participated in the traditional dancing parade of Hinokuni Matsuri, which proved to be very similar in spirit to San Antonio's own Fiesta celebrations.

more images can be seen at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/41061933@N03/>

