

# KENGURO

## Newsletter vol.27

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Featured!!

Student Exchange with South  
Korea's Hanbat National  
University this year again!



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### We conducted student exchange with South Korea's Hanbat National University this year again!!

Following the last year's exchange, we once again held a mutual student exchange with South Korea's Hanbat National University (HBNU). From Sunday 24th to Thursday 28th August 2025, 10 students and 5 faculty members from HBNU visited our school for the exchange program, and from Sunday 21st to Friday 26th September, 10 students and 5 faculty members from our school visited HBNU in Daejeon, South Korea. Through various events such as the joint PBL (problem-based learning) activities by mixed student teams from our school and HBNU, laboratory tours, and cultural experiences, the students from both universities participated in a fulfilling exchange.

#### Exchange starts at Iwate University

In the morning of the first day of the program, following an opening address by Dean Osada of the Faculty of Engineering, mini lectures were given by 3 faculty members from HBNU and 3 faculty members from our university. In the afternoon, firstly we did self-introduction by students from both universities, and our students introduced the PBL themes, and secondly the joint PBL sessions with mixed teams from Japan and Korea began promptly. This time, we discussed the five PBL themes: (1) Engineering strategies for natural disasters caused by abnormal weather (water-related disaster), (2) Measures to address population decline in rural areas, (3) Methods to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, (4) Effective infectious disease control in developing countries, and (5) Green energy solutions to the ever-increasing energy demand.

Discussions were held on each theme by a team of 4, consisting of 2 students from HBNU and 2 from our university. On the second day, the joint PBL sessions were continued, and each team had a mid-term presentation session reporting their ideas. Based on questions and feedback from the faculty, each team refined their ideas in preparation for the joint PBL at HBNU. After the program completion ceremony, HBNU students visited research labs in 4 areas: chemistry, materials science and electronic engineering, social environment, and design information.

On the next day, we took a chartered bus trip to the Iwaizumi and Miyako areas for them to be familiar with Iwate. After enjoying the underground lake at Ryusendo Cave, we visited Jodogahama Beach in Miyako. We enjoyed a seafood rice bowl for lunch and stayed at Tsunagi Onsen.



Aug. 27 (Wed) at Jodogahama. We also enjoyed activities such as feeding black-tailed gulls.

(Right) A scene of the joint PBL on the first day. The students from both universities quickly got along with each other, facilitating smooth discussions.



(Left) The mid-term presentation of the joint PBL. Each group presented their ideas.

A commemorative photo taken after the mid-term presentation. The students looked at ease.



This is a mixed team from Hanbat National University and Iwate University. Each group seemed to be getting along well.



## Visit Hanbat National University!!

On the first day of the September program at HBNU, we had mini lectures conducted by 3 faculty members from our university and 3 from HBNU and the joint PBL sessions. The joint PBL continued until midday on the third day, and then the afternoon was dedicated to 20-minute result presentation per team. The professors evaluated each team's ideas, and the best presentation team was awarded the Gold Prize. In the morning of the fourth day, we toured the campus's Solar Cube, the semiconductor measurement and fabrication room, and the mechanical engineering lab to experience cutting-edge science and technology at Hanbat National University. In the afternoon, we made coasters using a 3D printer and did some sightseeing around Daejeon. On the same fourth day, which was the day before returning to Japan, we traveled to Seoul together with members of Hanbat National University, visited Gyeongbokgung Palace, the royal palace of the Joseon dynasty, and Hongdae, a youth district known as a hub of subculture, before heading home.



(Above) In front of Gyeongbokgun Palace at Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul.



(Left) Joint PBL results presentation at Hanbat National University. Everyone is fully focused on their presentations.

(Right) At the results presentation, the team that gives the outstanding presentation is awarded the Gold Prize.



(Above) A group photo taken after the completion ceremony.

### Student Comments

#### Yudai Ono, Graduate Course in Mathematical Science and Physics, M2



I don't think I will ever forget this program. The hours we spent in deep discussion with the Korean students during the PBL sessions, the moment we received the Gold Prize and exclaimed, "Us? Really!?" in disbelief, the time we shared lively meals and drinks together—every moment was truly wonderful, far more than I can put into words here. And precisely because I want to grow even closer to everyone, I now feel a strong, sincere desire to master English and other languages as well. This program gave me that motivation. I would like to close this message with respect and gratitude to all the friends with whom I shared such special moments.

#### KWON, AHYEON, Intelligent nano semiconductor, M1



In this program, we could learn and grow together beyond language and cultural boundaries. Working in teams composed of Korean and Japanese students, we shared ideas and explored solutions to social issues, gaining valuable insights by understanding each other's perspectives. Although there were language barriers at first, we built strong teamwork through mutual respect and active communication. As a result, we achieved the great honor of winning the Gold Prize in the final presentation. The time we spent became unforgettable memories. I sincerely thank the professors and teaching assistants for providing us with such a wonderful opportunity.

#### Yuki Kawata, Graduate Course in Chemistry, M1



As this was my first time participating in a PBL training program, I initially felt nervous and uncertain about interacting with the Korean students. However, once the exchange actually began, we gradually opened up to one another through meals and discussions. As we talked about our daily lives and personal interests, we grew even closer, and it became natural to understand each other's cultures and ways of thinking. Through this program, I realized that cross-cultural exchange is not a special event it is the willingness to understand the other person in everyday interactions that truly matters. I hope to apply what I learned from this experience to my future research and international exchanges. Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved for providing us with such a valuable opportunity.

#### Jeong, Juhyun, Chemical & Biological Engineering, M1



Collaborating with friends who spoke a different language was a challenge that began with more worry than excitement. We engaged in many conversations and found joy in getting to know each other through the process. As we tried our best to understand one another, the language barrier naturally faded away. Talking about various topics to communicate became a source of laughter and energy, connecting us more sincerely than fluent words ever could. We had gained something far greater than just technical achievements. This program will remain one of the most unforgettable experiences of my university life—giving me precious relationships and lasting memories beyond the final outcome.

### Editor's Note ★ The editors of the KENGURO Newsletter have changed ★

Beginning this year, the KENGURO Quarterly Newsletter will be handled by Shiba and Kuzuhara from the Materials Science Course of the Faculty of Science and Engineering. We appreciate your support. Although we still have much to learn, we hope to publish many articles on international exchange. If you know of any study-abroad experiences from Iwate University students who went overseas, or stories from international students who came to study at Iwate University, please feel free to let us know.

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