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UWF Emerge Scholars study social work in Japan

Pensacola, Fla. – July 19, 2016 – Students in the University of West Florida College of Education and Professional Studies recently spent time in Japan, studying social work practices abroad.

Five students and one faculty member traveled to Tokyo, Saitama and Kyoto as part of the Immersive Experiences in Social Work course offered through the CEPS Emerge program.

Emerge provides opportunities for students to participate in high-impact experiential learning activities that research has shown can broaden their perspectives, deepen their understanding of diversity, and prepare them to be more effective in the 21st century workforce.

Coordinated with the Jikei Group of Colleges, the Japan trip allowed UWF students to research substance abuse policy, prevention, treatment and intervention in Japan as well as participate in activities tailored for their discipline. Their work included visits to a probation office, hospital and rehabilitation center. According to trip leader Paula Rappe, assistant professor and baccalaureate program director in the UWF Department of Social Work, the students were able to exchange information about their research with Jikei College students and take excursions to cultural and historic sites, including the Japanese Diet and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.



“Studying abroad has a way of opening our minds to how we deal with problems by exposing us to what others are doing to address similar problems around the world,” Rappe said.

The students are now compiling information gathered during the trip for a presentation to the UWF Office of Undergraduate Research. In November, they will share a multimedia presentation at the 19th annual US-Japan Social Welfare Symposium, which Japanese students

and faculty from the Saitama College of Social Welfare and Tokyo College of Welfare will attend at UWF.

“As a college, we have been particularly proud of the CEPS Study Abroad to Japan program because it is part of a special partnership UWF has with the Jikei College Group,” said Kimberly McCorkle, an administrative fellow in the UWF Division of Academic Affairs.

“Our UWF students, who represent many disciplines in our college, participate in a number of activities while they are in Japan and have the unique ability to collaborate with Jikei College students as they embark on these activities and plan projects with them,” McCorkle added. “These experiences are life-changing for our students, and they report that their study abroad experiences impact them deeply and help them make decisions about their career goals.”

The Emerge program was developed to help CEPS faculty design and utilize high-impact practices, including study abroad and undergraduate research. Using a combination of techniques that have been shown to deepen student learning and engagement, these high-impact practices raise levels of performance, retention and success for students.

For additional information about the Emerge program, visit uwf.edu/emerge.

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