



American Economics Associations (AEA) Annual meeting in Philadelphia, United States

In today's world, with rapid technological development and IT (information technology) development, we have many chances to improve our learning abilities such as advanced ways of study, attending advanced seminars and meetings as well as being easily able to attend important annual conferences around the world. Globalization transforms the world into a "big village" where we can travel and have contact from East to West if we want. We can share in each country's updated information on politics, economics, society and culture can spread on the spot over the world. Due to these effects, we can study abroad conveniently if we try to join foreign study programs. We can have dynamic opportunities that offer future career development.

In my career, I chanced to learn about advanced academic courses as further study at International Christian University in Tokyo, Japan. This is rare and great chance both for me and developing countries. Nowadays, most developing countries, including my home country, Myanmar, are striving to reduce poverty and improve the nation's economic development. After attaining development pathways and advanced knowledge from developed countries, I can contribute to the nation's economic development as much as I can. Thus, the IDS Scholarship program is strongly supporting developing countries' future development.

During study at ICU, I took not only related graduated courses but also had many chances like site visits, learning through trips and attending international conferences. Among them, one invaluable experience was the American Economics Associations conference held in Philadelphia in the United States. The AEA conference is held annually in different cities in the United States. It was organized in 1885 and it was incorporated in Washington, DC, on February 3, 1923. The purposes of the association are:

1. The encouragement of economic research, especially the historical and

statistical study of the actual conditions of industrial life. 2.The issue of publications on economic subjects. 3.The encouragement of perfect freedom of economic discussion. The Association as such will take no partisan attitude, nor will it commit its members to any position on practical economic questions.

Philadelphia is the second largest city on the east coast and the fifth most populous city in the US. It is striking that this city is home place of the Philadelphia stock exchange and fortune 500 companies and is the center of economic activity in Philadelphia. So, it is really match with to hold the AEA conference and made me excited to go there.

According to our travel plan, we departed from Tokyo on January 2nd, 2014. This trip was the first challenge for me in 2014 due to being first time for both travelling to the US and attending the AEA conference. I was really excited to face the challenges and opportunity in a powerful Western country like the United States. Like me, other students in our group the same feeling and experience. Our flight departed from Narita Airport at 10:40 am to Chicago International Airport. Due to the time difference, we arrived in Chicago at 7am on January 2nd. From there, we planned to travel Philadelphia. Unfortunately, although Chicago's weather is not usually so bad, that day a snow storm hit around some cities of the United States including Chicago and Philadelphia. So, our flight to Philadelphia and many others were canceled. Unlike Japan's weather, the US's weather was so bad that if we went outside, the wind was so strong it hit our bodies. And the whole city was covered by snow. During that period we had a chance to visit the Chicago outlet fashion mall as extra learning.

Finally we were arrived in Philadelphia safely on 4th January 2014 and attended the AEA annual meeting's 2nd and 3rd days although we missed the 1st day. As soon as we arrived in Philadelphia, we met the consequences of the snow storm and snow covered streets. The AEA annual meeting was held separately at the same time in three different places, Loews Philadelphia Hotel, Philadelphia Marriott Hotel and Pennsylvania Convention Centre. We could attend freely whatever meeting as we preferred. For each academic paper, a chairman, the paper's researcher and joint speaker were included. Although we faced some difficulties, the AEA meeting gave me some knowledge about all economics fields, multidimensional topics related to international trade, macroeconomics and microeconomics and financial markets etc. Actually, we had chanced to learn

updated economic research and many researchers' points of view about their respective field.



After that, a continuing education program was held in the Shelton Hotel in Philadelphia's downtown area. In the education program, there were three different sections that we could participate in: Cross-Section Econometric, Economic Growth- Freedom and Education and the Economy. Among them, we attended Cross-Section Econometric with Prof. Alberto Abadie (Harvard University) and Joshua Angrist (MIT). From their lectures, I came to know clearly about econometric concepts, methods and statistical analysis. After finishing the continuing education program, we visited some famous places in Philadelphia like the history museum, Independence Hall, etc. Due to time limitations, we could not visit many famous places there. One memorable and invaluable chance was learning about the Liberty Bell, because the bell is the world's symbol for liberty and is also famous in the US and over the world: "Liberty bell is a very significant symbol for the entire democratic world," Nelson Mandela said in 1993.

On 6th Jan evening, we moved from Philadelphia to Washington DC by train. Washington DC is not only the capital city of the United States but also has many famous official buildings. After arriving in Washington DC, we stayed at the Hyatt Hotel that is located near the US Capitol and is also nice famous hotel in Washington DC. The next day, we visited the US Capitol and other famous places in Washington DC, including the National Museum of American History and the World Bank. Visiting the US Capitol was a great opportunity for us because it is the greatest place for the US and shows the American people's effort since a long time ago to until now as a role model for others. Likewise, in the museum we

learned about the evolution of American history according to each era's political, social, cultural and economical events. The World Bank is a big office building and represents all World Bank branches and the main centre for this organization. Finally, our trip finished on January 9th and we arrived back in Tokyo on 10th Jan. Although it was a short trip, this study in the US gave me invaluable experiences for my career. I also really appreciated the IDS program, Professor Heather A. Montgomery, Miss Satoko Ohno and all the persons who arranged this trip to be successful. After this US trip, one point I noted is we need to have more efforts like the American people's spirit. They never give up their efforts whenever they face the worst condition, and also I decided that I have to try as much as I can to develop our nation like the United States.



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