Katie’s portion of the article in the Wheel of Dharma

After spending nearly two weeks in Japan, I found it difficult to explain exactly what I have learned throughout my experience with this program. There is no single part of the trip that made an impression on me more than the people I had the pleasure of meeting. The hospitality and polite manner they treated me in was not like anything I had ever experienced, and it was truly a shock in comparison to America.

Both Kelli and I got to experience many parts of Kyoto, Hiroshima, Miyajima, Osaka, and Takaoka. In Kyoto, we got the opportunity to step into some beautiful temples, and even dress up in extravagant kimonos and wear oshiroi like a maiko. Hiroshima showed us just how devastating war can be, as we visited the museum and monument. Osaka and Takaoka showed us how kind people could be, as our home stays welcomed us with open arms and more generosity then one could imagine. When we returned to Kyoto, we were able to have an audience with Lady Otani, who was extremely kind hearted and down to earth.

After having the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing program, I feel extremely honored to have been chosen to experience Japan with Kelli. Every day I realize something new because with each day I spend away from Japan, I see differences in my life that have affected me more than I know. It still amazes me how people who are so similar to me can be so different just because we grew up on different parts of the world. And truthfully, I could write forever about my experiences in Japan and it still wouldn’t do the trip justice.