

## Friendship Salon – Experiencing Tea Ceremony

On June 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM, when we were just about to start our tea ceremony demonstration, a young German man rushed in at the last minute. Upon his arrival, much to our surprise, he took out a worn-out men's kimono and a half-width obi from a large paper bag. He quickly changed his clothes into kimono and sat between other Friendship Members (FMs) who were already seated.

A total of 28 FM people, including a family with children, a couple, and many individual participants, were seated in a large Japanese tatami room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Youth Plaza. First of all, they were divided into two groups, and had to wait in a sitting position on cushions on the tatami mat – a painful experience!

After Ms. Soukou Ishihara, the master of tea ceremony, explained tea ceremony manners, we experienced tea rituals, eating seasonal tea confectionery with a toothpick,

“Kuromoji,” and enjoyed drinking green tea, “Matcha.” Although the FMs appeared to be serious and nervous at first, they were more relaxed after tasting tea sweets, and started to express their interest and curiosity. At the end, they were able to make tea by themselves using a tea whisk, “Chasen,” and enjoyed drinking “Matcha.” The workshop ended at 3:30 PM.

We knew each other only in the classroom during Japanese language classes, but, through this tea ceremony experience, we got to know another side of each other that we do not normally see. It was a fun afternoon, as we were able to develop new friendships and deepen mutual understanding.

- written by Keiko Kajitani (Japanese Language Educational Activities Committee) and translated by Yoko Nakamura



# Participating in the 2019 Meguro UNESCO Summer Gathering

August 4 (Sun)-6 (Tue), 2019 YMCA Tozanso

I was able to learn a lot by having a valuable experience this summer, organizing and planning the UNESCO summer camp. I have known about this gathering because I have been participating in this program since I was in the lower grades of elementary school, but this time elementary and junior high school students have been invited to participate. Since I have been planning from the perspective of elementary and junior high school students in various aspects, we didn't organize lectures or convene UNESCO study groups, as in the past. This gathering was designed to give participants a little experience about UNESCO. I hope the participants now know a little more about UNESCO, I was still inexperienced as a staff member and relied on others. If there is an opportunity like this next year, I would like to believe: "Think about myself, move

from myself, and acquire the power to move others."

Although the first meeting was really good that the children enjoyed the summer, relaxing, chattering a lot and getting to know many others in just three days. There was also a child who was a little shy and was worried, but even she talked to the staff after a while and was able to get into the circle.

In this way, understanding and accepting someone who is different from you, or simply, "making friends" is the best way to make the world peaceful. No one wants to fight with friends, just make friends all over the world. I feel this program is a way to create a peaceful world for everyone.

- written by Reva Watanabe (Youth Member)  
and translated by Cris Mizue



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