

Horner Fellowship Report 2014

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This is a report on the Horner Fellowship Program from November 10-24, 2014. The library visit schedule was mainly organized around public libraries, but I also had an opportunity to visit other kinds of libraries, such as school library, university library, and museum library during the program. In addition to that, I attended a class of Library and Information Science in the University of Arizona. Moreover, I participated in the Arizona Library Association conference from November 12-14. This Horner Fellowship study tour gave me a wide range of perspective.

Before this program began, I had an impression that the system of the public libraries in the United States was more of an automation system. However, I realized that computer systems and human resources were well balanced. I was impressed by communication between librarians and users which were very active and lively. Library services were related closely and directly with interests and problems of local population and areas. For example, Food Program at the Santa Rosa Library is the program for the children who were born into poverty. This shows the library commitment for social problems and attempts to solve them. Japanese libraries also deal with local issues, but in the U.S. libraries' local situations influence library services in more direct ways.

I was impressed with libraries teaching literacy skills. Educational programs related with literacy were held not only in a school library but also in public libraries. The United States is a nation composed of various races, people who came from all around the world and are in different situations. This affects literacy programs in the libraries. All of the public libraries I visited had English language programs for their residents. Elementary school students were given several tasks related to spelling and reading during their library class in the school library. In Japan, we tend to have programs of foreign languages for people who have interests in foreign culture. This means that we assume that the literacy rate is high in Japan and we should not focus on the socially disadvantaged people. I realized that in the United States, the libraries and librarians intend to contribute their services for the equal opportunity. We, Japanese librarians should follow their example.

Attending at the University classes and the AzLA Conference was exciting. The certification system of librarians in Japan is very different from the United States. Japanese librarians do not need to have a master's degree. That is one of the reasons they are not treated as specialists. During my stay, I wanted to attend an actual class and check if and in what way the lesson contents were different. The class was about controlled vocabularies and ontologies and consisted of group work and discussion. I realized that the college classes are very difficult and different than those in Japan. The class was interesting and the

professor and students were friendly and forgiving. I enjoyed this visit and admired the curriculum of a master's program in the United States.

At the conference, I met a lot of librarians working in Arizona. They were very energetic, cheerful, and open-minded. They fit my image of an ideal librarian. The conference programs were rich and diverse. I felt little dizzy, but I was pleased that I could gain various ideas and information about library services.

The Horner Fellowship Program was an adventure for me. It was intense but meaningful and significant. I hope that my experience will be beneficial to libraries in Japan. Finally, I would like to say thank you to all of the people who I met in the United States. Especially, I am grateful to Jeanne Pfander, Alexandra Humphreys, and Jennifer Caldwell.



Yumiko with the Pfanders in Tucson



The Humphreys in Phoenix