

PII Internship Report by Sharlene Choi

ANA Crowne Plaza Kanazawa Hotel

The summer after my sophomore year, I was given the opportunity to be a PII Intern at ANA Crowne Plaza Kanazawa. Despite being unfamiliar with the hotel service profession, I was welcomed with great support and encouragement.

The first week of the internship consisted of an orientation hosted by the Human Resources Department. I was given a detailed tour of the hotel and introduced to the history and goals of ANA Crowne Plaza Kanazawa and the International Hotels Group (IHG). The IHG has nine hotel brands, with ANA Crowne Plaza being one of them, and over 4,700 hotels in 100 countries. They strive to achieve their motto, "Great hotels guests love." Since it was Celebrate Service Week, my orientation ended with a celebration party and raffle hosted by the managers for hotel staff members.

Although I spent most of my time working at the Guest Relations Division, I was able to work in the Housekeeping and PR & Marketing divisions as well. Additionally, since I expressed an interest in interpretation and translation, I helped translate posters, conversational notes, guides, and other documents.

In general, my workday started at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 5:00 p.m. Depending on the department and the intern's expressed interests, the work day duration may vary. In the Guest Relations department, I guided guests to their rooms and various facilities, provided travel advice, prepared cultural activities open to the public, and assisted in baggage delivery or postal service. In the beginning, I was always accompanied by a staff member; however, during the last few weeks of my internship, I was able to do tasks independently (although a co-worker was always available in case I needed help). ANA hotels place heavy emphasis on hospitality or おもてなしの心. To get a better understanding of the guests, おもてなしの心, and tourism in Kanazawa, a few co-workers and I organized cultural trips. The trips were tailored to what we thought would be interesting landmarks and cultural activities for foreigners and the younger generation. Specifically, I made Kaga Kebari (加賀毛針), explored Higashichayagai (東茶屋街), and went on a guided tour of Kenrokuen (兼六園), Tentokuen (天徳園), and Nagamachi Buchiyashiki (長町武家屋敷跡).

Two other hotel interns, from Ishikawa, trained with me in the Housekeeping and Guest Relations departments. It was an interesting learning experience for all three of us. Training in the housekeeping department lasted only two days; however, we never realized how meticulous, yet rapid, making a bed and

cleaning a hotel room had to be until this internship. During my few days at the PR and Marketing Department, I was able to participate in the process of designing and photographing for ANA Kanazawa's magazine. The experience provided insight into whether I wanted to pursue a career in marketing or design. It was amazing meeting the hotel's distinguished chefs and photographers. The highlight of my time in the Marketing Department was when I made wagashi (和菓子) and 加賀八幡起上がり with families from Kanazawa.

The PICMET conference took place during the last two weeks of my internship. Guests from various countries stayed at ANA hotel to set up or attend science, technology, and engineering conventions or seminars held each day. One of the most fulfilling aspects was not only providing guests advice about Kanazawa and Japan, but also engaging in deeper conversation. It was fun calling toy stores and planning out a map of potential shop locations for a professor from South Africa who wanted to buy a neuroscience backed educational アンパンマン toy for his 1 year old granddaughter. Another interesting situation was when we helped an economics professor from Oregon, who had been stranded in Kyoto for 4 days, find his colleagues in the hotel. Ultimately, being able to see the smiles on the faces of customers and co-workers gave me the most happiness.

The internship simulated a 40-hour work week; however, I still had time to travel with my host family, explore Kanazawa, and meet up with friends or co-workers during holidays or time off. During the weekends I volunteered either with my host mother at 大桑 for a 日本交流 program or visited 文恵さん at the Ishikawa Lounge. Volunteering for the 日本交流 program gave me the opportunity to converse with teachers from Indonesia who studied Japanese at Kanazawa University or lived in Japan and were learning to adjust to Japanese lifestyle. It was very intriguing learning about their culture, religion, and why they decided to forge connections with Japan. Similarly, spending time outside of work with my coworkers was insightful as well in terms of getting to know how Japanese people balance their professional and private life.

Thanks to PII, the Ishikawa Prefecture, and ANA Kanazawa, I grew as a person and made many unforgettable memories through this unique experience. I improved my Japanese communication skills, gained insight into social and business aspects of Japanese lifestyle, and gained valuable working experience. Most of all, I made new friends and continue to cherish these new connections. While the PII language program reinforced Japanese grammar and vocabulary through a textbook, I was still unable to communicate through speech very well. Therefore, I recommend this internship because it enables students to apply the Japanese they have learned so far into real life spur of the moment situations.



宿泊部とゲストリレーション部 (左) 秋向けの Bon Visage というちらしの撮影: PR とマーケティング部 (右)



加賀毛バリ体験 和菓体験(左) 葛饅頭と上生菓子の桃 (中) 加賀八幡起上がり体験 (右)