This past summer, I had the amazing opportunity of interning in the Ishikawa Faculty Comprehensive Training Center (the former Ishikawa Education Center). Through working with the dedicated teaching professionals of the Ishikawa Prefecture, I learned way more than I could have ever anticipated: during these two months, I not only had the chance to practice the language skills I learned from the PII program in the past year, but I also got to experience the Japanese workplace and learn about the Japanese education system. Furthermore, as I am interested in pursuing a career in the field of education in the future, observing and assisting with the daily work of the training center enables me to be a witness of the field: I got to see with my own eyes the incredible passion and dedication the teachers have for educating the future generation, and this further convinces me of the significant roles that teachers and educators play.

Ishikawa Faculty Comprehensive Training Center is an institution established by the prefectural government for the training and cultivate of young teachers for the public schools in Ishikawa. Thus, to ensure the quality of their teaching, the public school teachers in Ishikawa are required to come back to the center throughout their career (in their first 2 years, 5th, 10th and 20th year of teaching) and receive trainings to learn about new teaching methods and philosophies, get updated with the new education policies of the Board of Education and network with the other teachers in the prefecture and share experience with each other. The training directors who work at the center are all past teachers selected to organize trainings for the current teachers, so for the past summer, I had the privilege of working with the best teaching professionals of Ishikawa.

My main task for this internship is to attend and assist with the training lectures and workshops that are held in the center. These lectures and workshops are on a wide range of subjects (Math, English, Japanese, Natural Sciences, Music, Art, etc.) and topics (i.e.: discussion on the new education policy, discussion and practice of new teaching methods) For example, before the session gets started, I would help prepare the training materials and work at the reception desk to welcome the teachers and help them register in the sessions they will attend. Then, I will get to attend the training sessions that I am interested in and participate in the class activities along with the teachers. When there are English trainings, I will often help the instructors facilitate the class activities, practice speaking with the trainees and answer their questions as a teaching assistant. Because most of the training sessions are delivered in Japanese, it’s a great challenge for me to understand the content especially in the first place. But I do find myself getting adjusted to the linguistic environment bit by bit as time goes on. In a word, attending and helping with these trainings are great opportunities for me to improve my Japanese.
The training sessions that I attend are very informative and educational in all sense and taught me a lot about the Japanese education system and Japanese society. For example, many training lectures I attend talk about the attempt to widely utilize ICT in traditional classrooms in response to the trend of globalization and the increasing speed of information circulation; also, guided by the new education policies by the Japanese Board of Education, some training sessions address the ways to fundamentally change the traditional classroom style to develop active learning skills of the students—in order to cultivate future problem solvers for Japan’s urgent social problems such as the decreasing population. In a word, being a part of the training sessions offers me very valuable insights into the relation between the educational practices in public schools and current social needs, and makes me understand the status quo of Japanese society on a way deeper level than before. So I would personally recommend this internship opportunity not only to those who are interested in working in the education field in the future, but also those who are curious to learn more about the social conditions of Japanese society in general.

Through working with the training directors every day, seeing the amount of effort they put into their work and listening to their insights on education methods and Japanese school education, I begin to understand what it actually means to be a responsible educator. It is really inspirational to see how these teachers always try to think from the standpoint of the students to ensure an engaging learning experience and how they are always eager to learn new things in order to improve their skills and expand their knowledge. And coming out of this internship experience, I’m more assured of the importance of education and more determined on my aspiration to become a good educator for the future generations. In a word, I am truly grateful for all I have learned during these two months in the training center.
working at the English seminars

working at the reception desk
group picture on my last day