During the summer of 2019, I spent eight weeks participating in the Ishikawa Internship Program and interning at the Hokuriku Broadcasting Company. During the internship, I was able to shadow and experience various broadcasting jobs, and I also had the opportunity to travel to many different locations around Ishikawa Prefecture for news reporting and film shoots. From these experiences, I was also able to make sense of/realize the path I want to pursue for my future career; specifically, I am interested in working at an international media company in America or Japan, and, to achieve this career goal, the experience that I was given during this internship proved to be extremely helpful.

As an intern, I rotated through four different departments during my eight weeks at Hokuriku Broadcasting Company: the Announcer Department, the Television Production Department, the Radio Production Department, and the News Department. For the first six weeks of the internship, I trained in the announcer department, television production department, and the radio production department. During this training, I had the opportunity to appear on television and speak on the radio while observing the roles backstage as well. Then, for the final two weeks, I was able to create my own news feature with the News Department. From these eight weeks working at Hokuriku Broadcasting Company, I achieved a holistic understanding of the various positions at a Japanese broadcasting company while also having the opportunity to learn about Japanese business culture.

Even though my training in the announcer’s department lasted only a few days, I gained knowledge and skills that I was able to use throughout the rest of my time at the internship. In particular, I was surprised to learn that, when an announcer delivers the news or other
information, the most important element in communicating well was not fluency, but rather comprehensible and accessible Japanese. I applied this lesson throughout my internship, as it helped me gain more confidence in my Japanese speaking abilities and motivated me to improve my Japanese. Through these lessons, I also studied other important announcing skills, including correct pitch and speaking style.

For the next three weeks, I was able to shadow the production of a variety of television shows in the Television Production Department. For most of the time, I interned on the variety television show 『絶好調』 and I was also able to visit various locations through Ishikawa Prefecture for different film shoots. Every Wednesday, I participated in the VTR script readings with the staff in the editing room to watch the various VTR’s that were made for each week’s episode. Then, I learned how to make VTR voiceovers and was able to watch the announcers and everyone backstage assemble the footage and prepare for the live performance. After that, everyone in the television production department would gather for the full production meeting when the staff, crew, announcers, and talent would review the schedule for the live performance. During the dry rehearsal before the live broadcast of the variety show, I was occasionally able to help fill in for the talent. During the show, I was occasionally able to appear on television when I would help carry items on air. After the show, I was able to sit on the meetings where the producers and performers would discuss their experiences on the show that night, and I was also able to offer my own comments during this meeting.

Other than 『絶好調』, I was given the opportunity to attend the film shoots for two other television shows that MRO broadcasts and talk with a variety of local people from all over Ishikawa Prefecture. For instance, once I went to the Noto Aquarium and was able to talk with a marine biologist about the whale sharks at the aquarium while also learning more about the
famous sights and culture in Ishikawa Prefecture. Besides this, I attended the film shoot for a VTR segment about summer vegetables in Ishikawa, and I travelled with the talent to a variety of locations to try unique foods like Raspberry Miso during the film shoot. These unique experiences like the opportunity to talk to people in Ishikawa and try unusual foods were not only extremely fun but helped me explore more about the specialties of the Hokuriku region. I also attended the live broadcasting of a J-League soccer match, and I was able to learn about real-time sports broadcasting. Not only did I attend these film shoots and live broadcasts, but for one of the television shows, I also edited a small portion of a video about summer yukatas that was broadcasted during my time in Ishikawa. From these multitude of experiences, I was able to learn about television broadcasting.

Every Thursday during my time at the company, I interned with the radio production department for the show 『おいね★どいね』, where I travelled around Ishikawa Prefecture with announcers and appeared on the radio with the segment “Radio Car.” During the live broadcast around Ishikawa Prefecture for “Radio Car,” I tried Japanese watermelon, travelled to a traditional vinegar factory, interviewed a staff member at the Kanazawa Noh Museum, and ate nagashi-somen at a restaurant in the prefecture. At all of these special locations, I was able to offer my impressions and thoughts from the perspective of an American. From these wonderful experiences every week, I was also able to learn more about Japanese culture.

The final department that I interned at was the News Department, which broadcasts the news show 『レオスタ』 on week days. During my time in this department, I shadowed and participated in news reporting around the prefecture. Every day, I travelled to different locations around the prefecture with a reporter, learned how to write the news script, and then watched the editing of the news video. Further, during some of the news reporting, I translated English
interviews into Japanese; for instance, I translated some English into Japanese from a press conference for the violinist Kolja Blacher who was conducting a concert in Kanazawa. Further, I attended the Ishikawa Prefecture High School Baseball Tournament, and I was interviewed for the news for my impressions about Japanese high school baseball. Further, I attended the opening of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch Running Event where I interviewed both locals and wrote a news script that focused on the design of the Olympic Torch.

At the end of the internship, I made my own news segment on a theme of my choice. I chose to write about the relationship between social media and tourism in Kanazawa, and I then organized and arranged the various locations and topics I reported on for the segment. During my time as a reporter, I interviewed people in both English and Japanese, and I was able to translate all the English into Japanese for the news report. I then wrote a script, edited the news video, and then appeared on『レオスタ』to report my news segment. This experience was the culmination of all of the skills that I was able to learn throughout my time in the different departments.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to exchange in this meaningful experience where I was able to learn about Japanese business culture and broadcasting from a unique perspective. I am also extremely thankful for my host family who also supported me during my time at this internship.