

Name: Ryon Yu

Home Institution: Duke University School of Medicine, USA – 1st Year Medical Student

Laboratory Visited: Orthopedics/Rheumatology, Osawa Lab

2025 Summer Program Nagoya University Graduate School of Medicine: Experience Report

This program hosted by Nagoya University (NU) Graduate School of Medicine was an unforgettable once-in-a-lifetime experience that combined medical education, cultural exploration, and social connection. Though only a weeklong, each day was packed with fruitful activities and rich experiences. I ardently and wholeheartedly recommend future students to participate in this program.

One of the primary educational objectives of this program was to explore the healthcare systems, similarities and differences between our countries—Japan, China, and the United States—and particularly regarding community medicine and medical advancements. I had the privilege of visiting Dr. Osawa's lab in the Department of Orthopedics & Rheumatology, which was fascinating to see their AR/AI projects that will enhance surgical planning and outcomes for joint arthroplasty. The visit to NU's xR Center and Simulation Lab further demonstrated how useful these technologies are to medical training and practice. Shadowing a surgery in the operating room with Dr. Osawa was also a highlight experience and a unique glimpse into the differences in practice between Japan and the US.

Lectures by Drs. Ueda, Ichihashi, and Umegaki, to name a few—and the NU medical students themselves—were very informative and highlighted many strengths of Japanese healthcare. It was eye-opening to learn how goals and delivery of care differ, for instance *where* care is delivered (e.g. at home or community clinics, versus prototypical large hospitals), who delivers the care and how, and certainly, who pays for it. The visit to Kagayaki Clinic and the home visits were a cornerstone experience for this program and emphasized *aging in place*; that is, empowering patients to live and ultimately die at home, which goes beyond providing care to merely sustain life. This practice is something the US could direly learn from, and is a lesson I take back home to apply in my future career.

All of our societies, though particularly Japan and China, face an aging population, and we had important discussions and learned from each other about how we can tackle this challenge. The US manages the burden with a diverse workforce and inter-professional care, China is pioneering AI services in medicine to broaden care access and education, and Japan emphasizes healthy aging and quality of life. For each of our respective healthcare systems and societies, there are aspects we can adapt and mutually adopt.

Without a doubt, I gained a deeper understanding of our healthcare systems and an appreciation for each. However, even surpassing the educational value of this program were the social bonds I made with my peers. All of them are the most magnanimous, brightest, and sincerest individuals, with whom I am extremely grateful to have become friends. From strolling through the streets of Mino donning yukata's, to weekend trips to Ise shrine and Nagoya Castle, late-night karaoke and izakaya's, to post-program meetups in Tokyo and Shanghai, the people—these friends—truly made this program unforgettable.

To have this opportunity to meet such exceptional people, to bridge our cultures and healthcare systems, and to build these professional and personal connections are the reason this program is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I give my deepest gratitude to Drs. Hasegawa, Bustos, Chizuki, Mika, and all of the staff and faculty at Nagoya University who made this program possible. It has been my great honor and privilege to be a part of this program. I would do it again in a heartbeat, I would support its continuation and growth without reserve, and I would encourage every student to seize and maximize this opportunity to the fullest.