



PHOENIX
Sister Cities
Discovery Changes Everything.

presents

Teach Abroad - Himeji 2018 Participants



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Zachary Baker is an Arizona man first and last. He was born in Phoenix and grew up in Tempe where he started playing soccer at a young age. Besides enjoying the sport, he found that soccer opened him up to a love of travel and other cultures. Playing with Sereno Soccer Club out of Scottsdale, he travelled to most states in the U.S. as well as Mexico, Europe, and Brazil. After graduating from Corona del Sol, Zach completed an English degree in creative writing and won a NAIA National Soccer Championship at Azusa Pacific University in Southern California. In his Senior at APU, Zach studied abroad at Oxford University to work on writing. Upon returning to the U.S. and graduating, he interned at the BBC in DC during the 2008 presidential election. Soon after that, Zach moved to Chengdu,

Sichuan, China where he taught English at Sichuan University for 6 years. While in Chengdu, Zach became more involved with Phoenix Sister Cities which led to his interest in learning more about Himeji and jumping at the opportunity to teach there. His goal is to cultivate and grow relationships between Phoenix and our other Sister Cities.



Roger Blievernicht spent his childhood in the Coconino forests of Flagstaff, Arizona before moving to the valley for college. He was always interested in different cultures and languages and especially Japanese. Feeling that it was a more practical decision for living in Arizona he went on to obtain a Bachelors in Spanish from Arizona State University in addition to an International Business Studies Certificate. Even after his education Roger still felt that he had a deep curiosity and desire to understand Japanese culture that could only be satisfied by living and working in Japan. He later went on to get a TEFL certificate from the Arizona Language Academy where he was instructed about educational theory, second language acquisition and teaching in a multicultural setting that later

resulted in a position as a substitute ESL teacher. In his free time he loves to skateboard and has taught skateboarding in a variety of settings such as local skate parks, summer camps, and afterschool programs. Roger is very excited to share his love of language learning, teaching and Arizona to his new community of Japanese students.



Mackenzie Dye was born and raised in Phoenix before attending the University of Arizona where she received a Bachelor's of Science in Biology with a minor in East Asian studies. She took courses about Japanese religion, culture, and language and also studied abroad in Tokyo for five weeks to take an anthropology course about the Japanese people. She also participated in Air Force ROTC, where she learned how to be a leader. She got her first experience teaching when she was tasked with creating lesson plans to teach new cadets how to be successful in ROTC and the US Air Force for a semester.

She's also enjoyed Japanese media and food since she was a teenager. Her favorite video games include Okami and Final Fantasy XIV and my favorite animes are Samurai Champloo and Gurren Lagann. She loves sushi, okonomiyaki, yakitori, ramen...the only Japanese food she can't eat is natto! She's looking forward to experiencing seasonal treats and regional specialities in Himeji.

Before joining the Sister Cities Teach Abroad program, she worked as an English teacher in a cram school in Fukui Prefecture for six months. I'm eager to use my English teaching experience to help