

My unforgettable memories with Dr. Sano and the members of the  
Japanese Society of Pediatric Dentistry in Japan

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Lucky to be the first “ASUNARO Award” winner, I was invited to Japan thanks to the great support of Dr. Sano and the members of the Japanese Society of Pediatric Dentistry. Prof. Hyun accompanied me as my supervisor during the trip.

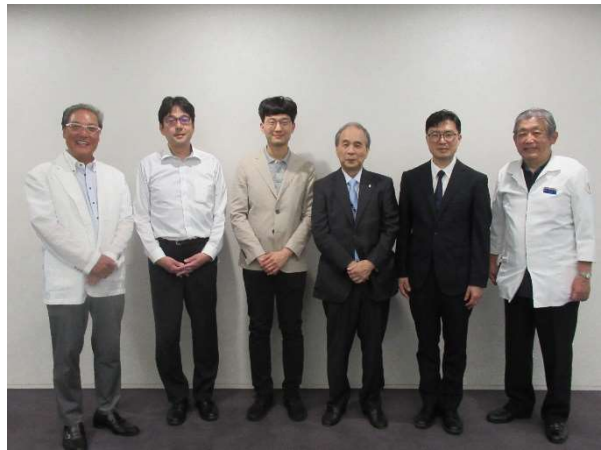
On the 21st of July, the first day of the trip, Dr. Tanaka welcomed us warmly at the arrival gate of Haneda Airport. Thanks to the favor of his kind consideration, we made it comfortably to our hotel in Tokyo, the Tokyo Dome Hotel.

We were greeted by Prof. Ide, Prof. Shintani, and Dr. Sakurai at the Tokyo Dental College Suidobashi Hospital (東京齒科大學水道橋病院).



Dr. Sakurai guided us on a tour around the hospital. We looked around the hospital, including clinics of the division of pediatric dentistry and special needs dentistry. One of the most exciting parts of the tour was the collection of skulls and anatomic models. The idea of collecting dental casts from the same patient in chronological order was very impressive.

Then we moved on to the Tokyo Metropolitan Center for Oral Health of Persons with Disabilities (東京都立心身障害者口腔保健 Center). I was admired for the high-quality facilities and such a well-organized system of dental care for disabled people.



We received a great deal of hospitality from Prof. Shintani, Dr. Sakurai, Prof. Hironaka, and Dr. Tanaka for dinner at the <<Kyoto cuisine 熊北店 Tempura>> inside the Tokyo Dome Hotel. With a fantastic view from the restaurant and delicious food, we shared topics and issues of pediatric dentistry in Japan and Korea and enjoyed great times.





On the 22nd of July, the next day, Dr. Tanaka guided us to Tokyo Station, to make a journey to Toyama, the home of Dr. Sano's ASUNARO clinic. After traveling for about two hours by the Hokuriku Shinkansen, Dr. Sano welcomed us with warm greetings at the platform of Toyama station. Thanks to his kind reception, we enjoyed sushi omakase as lunch and looked around his clinic. The pleasant and joyful atmosphere of his clinic, <<ASUNARO KINGDOM>> put me right away into the world of innocence!



After spending the afternoon at his <<ASUNARO KINGDOM>>, we were invited to the dinner party by Dr. Sano and the staff members of his clinic, where we had a Japanese cuisine course meal using Toyama delicacies. Not only did we enjoy the fresh seafood and delicious sake, but were also impressed by the warm friendship and hospitality of Dr. Sano and his staff members. Thanks to them, I went back to the hotel drunk with sake in a completely good mood!



On the 23rd of July, the third day, Dr. Sano guided us on a whole-day tour to Kanazawa, a city with the source of the Hokuriku culture. The weather was sunny and clear, and thanks to Dr. Sano we could avoid the heat by moving around the city's touristic spots with a taxi. We visited the Kanazawa Castle, the Nomura-ke Samurai Residence, the Ninja Temple (妙立寺), and the 21st-century Museum of Contemporary Art. The complex mazelike features made from the many hidden aisles and doors of the Ninja Temple were very interesting, and the optical illusionary pool installation art at the 21st-century museum was really surprising!



At lunch, Dr. Sano took us to <<Kinjohro>>, a representative of traditional Japanese ryokan in Kanazawa. We were astonished by the delicate meals and the cordial reception by the people of the restaurant. I enjoyed all the food and such a peaceful ambiance at the traditional place thanks so much to Dr. Sano's warm consideration.





Dr. Sano's hospitality was a series of surprises. For dinner, after returning to Toyama, he served us dinner at a Japanese-style grill bar at the ANA Crown Plaza Hotel Toyama. We enjoyed grilled lobsters and steak, appreciating the evening scenery of Toyama. After that, Dr. Sano invited us to his house. We spent the last evening there having more food with sake, listening to the beautiful melody of the piano in the background.



On the 24th of July, the last day, Dr. Sano took us to Toyama station, and we said goodbye to him. We were so grateful to him for inviting us to Japan and giving us great hospitality. I could feel how good he was for his people and the society. I also want to show gratitude to Dr. Tanaka, for playing great consideration for our comfortable and grateful trip to Japan, and members of the Japanese Society of Pediatric Dentistry for all their support. I hope that the society of pediatric dentistry in Japan and Korea can make intimate relationships, and can continuously interact both academically and culturally. Once again, I appreciate Dr. Sano and the members of the Japanese Society of Pediatric Dentistry for providing us with such a memorable experience. I look forward to meeting them shortly, with warm welcomes, in international societies.

