

## newsletter\_201410\_acestudents



### ACE Student Spotlight: *Tsukina Miyashita*

**Tsukina Miyashita** is a visiting student from J.F. Oberlin University in **Tokyo, Japan**. She came to the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith through the UAFS **American Culture and Experience** program. This is not her first time living in a foreign country. She lived in **Taiwan** for two years when she was younger.

Miyashita says her favorite parts of living and studying abroad include learning slang and improving her English. She says talking and meeting Americans can be challenging because of the language barrier, but she is always trying her best to improve.

Even though Miyashita comes from the other side of the globe, she has some American tastes. Her hobbies include “listening to American music, like Selena Gomez and Taylor Swift.” While she will only be here for the fall semester, she says she will miss some things about American life: “I will miss free refills on drinks from restaurants. We do not have that in Japan.”

### ACE Faculty Spotlight: *Heather Edwards*

As one of the faculty members involved with the UAFS American Culture and Experience program, **Heather Edwards** helps ACE students with their language education. Edwards is well poised to educate international students, having lived on three continents.

This is her fifth semester with the ACE Program. “The small class sizes allow for very flexible class styles with individualized instruction,” she says. While hesitant to make generalizations, Edwards says international students are frequently more motivated to attend class because they may have more at stake. When asked what advice she would give to students, she says: “Take responsibility for your own education. The classroom experience is undoubtedly valuable, but in order to get the most out of it, you must be actively involved in the process.”





## Girls Inc. Culture Exchange

The American Culture and Experience Program at the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith gives international students more than just a chance to experience American culture and life: It also gives them a chance to teach and exchange ideas with others about their own culture.

Through the ACE Program, several international students did just that when they visited **Girls Inc. of Fort Smith**, a recreational center for young local girls.

The ACE participants, who hail from **Japan**, taught aspects of Japanese culture, and instructed the local girls in the traditional Japanese arts of **origami** and **calligraphy**.

The young girls learned how to fold pieces of colorful origami paper into traditional shapes, such as cranes, and also into more modern shapes, including hearts and rabbits.

The ACE participants also demonstrated how to use calligraphy ink and brushes to write Japanese characters. The local girls tried the traditional characters but also used the brushes and ink to write in English and draw pictures.

While the young American girls learned a little bit about Japanese culture, the international students experienced a real cultural exchange. They had fun interacting with the Fort Smith community and practicing the English skills they learn while studying at UAFS.

