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AMERICA'S EDUCATION EDGE: MORE THAN JUST A DEGREE

In 2024, the United States attracted more than 1.1 million international students, drawn by its reputation as a hub of technology and innovation, the high standards of its universities and prospects for career advancement.

Although it is not a significant source of international enrollment (less than 1%), Japan has experienced a steady increase in the popularity of American schools among its students.

According to the Statista website, there were 13,959 Japanese students in the United States between 2023 and 2024.

For Japanese students, the most significant factor in selecting the United States is the close ties between business and academia, which result in clear and smooth career pathways.

A distinct advantage of U.S. educational institutions is their close integration with industry, like **Keck Graduate Institute**, a private graduate school in Claremont, California.

Founded in 1997, KGI offers a range of innovative academic and professional programs under three schools: the School of Pharmacy, the School of Health Sciences and the Henry E. Riggs School of Applied Sciences.

KGI has the third-best accredited master's degree program as ranked by Intelligent.com this year, behind the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University, and boasts a job placement rate of 90% within six months of graduation.

"Every student here receives experiential learning through direct engagement with industry, research institutions and health care clinics," said **KGI President Mohamed Abousalem**.

Attracting a growing number of Japanese students interested in pursuing careers in technology and engineering, **Gonzaga University** is emerging as a technology hub in the Northwest, particularly in aerospace, aviation and the STEM disciplines, which span science, technology, engineering and math.

"We are creating a center to develop and manufacture materials vital to the future of aerospace and aviation industries and providing exciting opportunities for our students and industry partners," said **Associate Provost for Global Engagement Christina Isabelli**.

Established in 1887, Gonzaga University is a private liberal arts institution in Spokane, Washington, with an enrollment of nearly 7,500 students and offers 16 undergraduate degrees, 23 master's programs and five doctoral degrees.

Elsewhere in the United States, several schools have strengthened international collaboration to enhance their education.

The University of Tennessee in Knoxville, for example, has established partnerships with Japanese institutions,



Despite the current challenges, American universities are still predicted to dominate global rankings next year.

including Kobe University.

"Collaborations with Japanese universities are advancing our research in materials science, renewable energy and green technologies," explained **UTK Vice Provost for International Affairs Gretchen Neisler**.

Apart from those partnerships, UTK is also creating a Japan Center to further deepen academic and corporate ties with Japan.

In the meantime, career pathways in engineering and manufacturing have gained popularity through programs designed in collaboration with global corporations. **Navajo Technical University** in New Mexico focuses on career-focused education through partnerships with major organizations, such as Sandia National Laboratories and Boeing.

"We are also exploring collaborations in semiconductor manufacturing and clean energy, areas where Japan has leading expertise," said **NTU President Elmer Guy**.

On a grassroots level, community colleges have become pivotal instruments in the upskilling of local workers. **Motlow State Community College** in Nashville, Tennessee, partnered with Mitsubishi Electric Automation to widen the skills of students for fast-growing high-tech industries, like electric vehicles and automation.

Partnerships with Japan go beyond technology-sharing and skills-training if education is to be holistic and significant.

For **Hitoshi Abe**, director of the Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies at the **University of California, Los Angeles**, deeper cultural literacy and cross-cultural engagement will yield better bilateral relations between the United States and Japan.

"We recognize that Japan's dynamic and evolving culture needs to be understood in a global context," Abe said. ■

KGI: SHAPING THE NEXT WAVE OF BIOTECH INNOVATORS

The global life sciences industry is projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 10.28% over the next decade, with the United States maintaining its leadership in the sector.

Home to 36.5% of the world's largest life sciences companies, the U.S. continues to attract top-tier biomedical innovation, particularly in states like California, which generates over \$414 billion annually in economic output.

At the heart of this innovation is **Keck Graduate Institute** in Claremont in Southern California's biotech corridor. Ranked third in the nation behind the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford, KGI stands out for its interdisciplinary approach, merging science with management to produce industry-ready professionals.

"Our rankings reflect the value and quality of education at KGI. Over 90% of our graduates secure jobs within six months at leading life sciences, biotechnology and health care companies. We emphasize experiential learning through industry-hosted programs, ensuring our students train on real-world projects," said **KGI President Mohamed Abousalem**.

Since its founding in 1997, KGI has built strong industry partnerships, including a decade-long collaboration with Biocon Academy in India to offer bioscience certifications.

"Our corporate alliances ensure students receive mentorship, employment opportunities and hands-on training," Abousalem said.

Looking ahead, KGI aims to expand its global reach.

"We want to be the gateway to the U.S. for international STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) talent. By fostering joint degrees and research collaborations, we're poised to lead the future of life sciences worldwide," he concluded. ■

<https://www.kgi.edu>



KGI President Mohamed Abousalem



KECK GRADUATE INSTITUTE

A Member of The Claremont Colleges

GLOBAL STEM TALENT FINDS A HOME AT GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

With a mission to cultivate a community where intellect and compassion thrive equally, **Gonzaga University** has long been a leader in nurturing science, technology, engineering and mathematics talent in Spokane, Washington.

Its 61.5-hectare residential campus, located in an affordable city, offers 16 undergraduate degrees, 23 master's programs and five doctoral programs. Coupled with an intensive English-language proficiency program and attractive scholarship opportunities, Gonzaga has become a dynamic hub for local and international students, particularly those aspiring to build careers in STEM innovation.

"Gonzaga's high-touch approach and focus on intercultural understanding help integrate advanced study and research with the community's needs," said **Christina Isabelli, associate provost for global engagement**.

Gonzaga's long-standing partnerships with Sophia University, Kinjo University and Akita International University in Japan resulted in a steady stream of exchange students, particularly in informatics and applied sciences, environmental science and business administration.

Japanese nationals, dual citizens and mixed

heritage students have benefited from Gonzaga's excellent academic programs and personalized holistic development opportunities that prepare them for visionary undertakings.

Two such initiatives are the Inland Northwest Tech Hub, a cutting-edge center for developing and manufacturing materials essential to the aerospace and aviation industries, and the new Institute for Informatics, which is Gonzaga's cornerstone for technology and informatics that provides humanity-infused, artificial intelligence-centered technology literacy.

"This hub will merge advanced technology, study and research for our students and faculty, empowering them to contribute to visionary projects and develop their skills in STEM innovations," Isabelli said.

Determined to expand its global footprint, Gonzaga seeks to increase its collaborations with Japanese institutions and corporations. With its state-of-the-art facilities and commitment to workforce development, the university presents an exceptional opportunity for Japanese partners looking to invest and innovate in the Pacific Northwest. ■

<https://www.gonzaga.edu/admission>



Gonzaga University's College Hall

