

August 12, 2023

## Summer School for Girls (Natsu-gaku) 2023 Implementation Report

Reiko Inagi, Chairperson of Natsu-gaku 2023 Executive Committee

Summer School for Junior High and High School Girls 2023 (hereinafter referred to as "Natsu-gaku") was held at the National Women's Education Center from August 5th to 7th. Ninety-eight female junior and senior high school students from 29 prefectures in Japan participated. Thirty-one university and graduate student staff ("TAs" including five student planning committee members, members of academic societies in the field of science and engineering (member organizations of the Liaison Association for Gender Equality), university and high school teachers, researchers and engineers from companies served as executive committee members and program staff. The three-day science program was held under the united leadership of more than 200 support members.

It was the first face-to-face meeting in four years, and we felt a degree of excitement appropriate to the beginning of the evolution of Natsu-gaku in the post-Corona era..

### \* Natsu-gaku Day 1

Natsu-gaku 2023 began with an opening declaration by the chairperson of the executive committee, Professor Reiko Inagi of the University of Tokyo. Students were divided into groups of 20 and met and greeted for the first time with the TAs in charge of taking care of them. Still in a state of nervousness, they quickly became acquainted with their newly acquainted peers and underwent orientation with smiles on their faces.

The first science program, "Career Lecture," began with a video letter from Prof. Teruo Fujii (President of the University of Tokyo). He encouraged participants to talk with a variety of people, deepen exchanges, and create a prosperous future connected with the world at Natsu-gaku.

Ms. Rina Tajima (Rina Tajima Design Office) gave a lecture on the real pleasure of designing one's own life by pursuing one's own interests, presenting one's own problems, and solving them.

Dr. Saki Kawakubo (Tokyo Stock Exchange, Inc.) talked about her career from her time as a



student in the sciences to her current position as a member of society, and emphasized the importance of not worrying about choosing something that interests you and of gaining the understanding of those around you in your career path.

The following TAs' projects, "Atsumare Rikejo no Mori (Gather in the Rikejo Forest)" and "Solve it with your friends! Science Quiz," each group was guided by a TA as they communicated with their new friends through games and quizzes, and made efforts to make new friends. After dinner, in a TAs' project "talk.talk.talk!!", students were divided into groups according to their hometowns and fields of interest in order to find their "place," and deepened their friendship with their friends who would spend the three days with them. In order to find one's place in the world, it is necessary to interact with others, to find oneself, and to learn more about oneself. It was a project where you could experience the real thrill of connecting with a diverse range of people, and enthusiastic conversations resounded throughout the venue.

#### \* Natsu-gaku Day 2

On the day of the event, over 200 researchers and technicians from universities and companies conducted a variety of projects designed to show students the best of research in a wide range of science and engineering fields and to share ideas with a diverse group of people through dialogue.

In the morning, experiments and practical training were conducted by 15 cooperating science and engineering societies and companies, who challenged the students to become mini-scientists. In the afternoon, 37 organizations presented poster exhibits, and students were free to look around the poster exhibits and deepen their scientific knowledge by listening to explanations from researchers and engineers at booths of their interest. In the following "Career and Technical Advisory Café," students visited 19 booths divided by research fields and themes and asked researchers and technicians for individual career and technical advice, using the experts' experiences and opinions to develop their own future career images. In another TAs' project, "Shape Your Dreams - Let's Make a Future Projection Chart," students created their own future outlook and career plans based on their experiences during Natsu-gaku.

Students learned about the diversity of science and engineering research fields through experiments and hands-on science experiences, and through communication with researchers at the poster exhibition.



\* Natsu-gaku Day 3

Students created their own timelines for the future by incorporating the knowledge they experienced and gained through the two-day science program and compiling them into a "Future Projection Map." The students presented these to each other, exchanged opinions, and encouraged each other. Of course, the TAs and committee members also gave their full support to the hopeful future plans.

Afterwards, the TAs delivered their messages in the last TAs' project "Hana ga Saku (Flowers Bloom)," and certificates of completion were handed to participants. In closing, the executive committee chairperson Inagi's self-aid, "The experiences and learning during Natsu-gaku, which are different from daily life, will lead to confidence in the future, and will expand to new learning. Let's meet again somewhere in the future." The closing declaration was made with cheering for female junior high and high school students.

Although the three-day camp was short, everyone left with smiles and tears in their eyes as they said goodbye to their friends who had become close through living together. It was hoped that Natsu-gaku would provide an opportunity for the students to learn about diverse values and to think about their future career paths, which would help them in their future careers when they face difficulties.



Natsu-gaku 2023 has been very meaningful in building the foundation for new Natsu-gaku management in the post-Corona era.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the academic societies and companies that participated in each project for your warm support and ask for your continued support and guidance to the spirit of Natsu-gaku that has been passed down to us. We would also like to thank all the grantees for their support.

