

THE CO-OP JAPAN PROGRAM 



# CO-OP JAPAN PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT 2005

2005年度 コー・オブ・ジャパン・プログラム年報



Work



Culture



Growth



Discover



## Program Overview

The Co-op Japan Program is a Canadian university/college based, international co-op/internship program linking some of the best engineering, science, business and arts discipline undergraduate students from across the country with highly committed Japanese businesses. The Co-op Japan Program formally integrates an undergraduate student's Canadian academic studies with valuable work experience in a Japanese company. The program is open to universities and colleges nationally and is currently administered from The University of British Columbia.

## Mandate

The Co-op Japan Program's mandate is to provide Canadian undergraduate students with career-related work experience within a Japanese company during their undergraduate curriculum and at the same time to provide Japanese companies with the opportunity to employ highly capable and motivated Canadian undergraduate students.

## Vision

The Co-op Japan Program's vision is to be the leading international co-op/internship program for Japanese employers requiring students and the best program for Canadian undergraduate students wishing to complete co-op work terms/internships in Japan.

## Mission

The Co-op Japan Program's mission is to provide a meaningful integration of Japanese work and culture and a valuable learning experience to Canadian undergraduate students and to provide participating Japanese employers with Canadian undergraduate students who can make valuable contributions to their organizations.

## Director's Message

September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

I am pleased to present the 2005 Co-op Japan Program Annual Report. The Co-op Japan Program is a Canadian university based, international internship program linking some of the best undergraduate students from across the country with highly committed Japanese businesses. We currently have forty-one highly capable, energetic and enthusiastic students working in twenty-one Japanese businesses.

The Co-op Japan Program was founded in 1991 with the original aim of the program being to encourage long-term opportunities for scientific and industrial exchanges between Canada and Japan. Over the years the program has expanded to include undergraduate students not only in the engineering and science disciplines but also in business and arts.

Over a fourteen year period, five hundred and sixty-nine Canadian university undergraduate students have participated in the Co-op Japan Program. Returning Co-op Japan students have claimed that their work experience in Japan has helped them to qualify for more Canadian career opportunities than their peers outside of the Program. In addition, many Co-op Japan students have enjoyed their experience in Japan so much that they have returned to Japan after graduation to pursue work opportunities. Japanese companies have expressed tremendous satisfaction with the levels of performance, maturity and responsibilities exhibited by Co-op Japan students.

The Co-op Japan Program's leadership has recently changed with the retirement of Mr. Barry Brooks, the Program's previous Director in March, 2005 and my appointment as Director in April, 2005. We are currently working diligently on a strategic plan which we expect will lead to increased Co-op opportunities being available in Japan and increased student placements next year. One aspect of the strategic plan is to increase marketing efforts over the next twelve months in Canada and Japan to raise awareness of the Program and to raise the Program's profile.

Another aspect of the strategic plan is to review all aspects of the Program including pre-departure student training, language testing, technical report requirements, student and employer evaluations, employer relations and contact, and contact with Co-op Japan student alumni. Our objective with this review is to identify areas to improve the Program so that we can achieve the highest level of satisfaction from our stakeholders.



*Photo Courtesy of Briar Gorton*

The results represented in this annual report demonstrate the continued success and longevity of the program. A reason for the Program's success is the participation of a national consortium of universities in the Program, which distinguishes it from all other international internship programs operating in Japan. The Program aims to have at least forty-five technical and twenty-five non-technical co-op placements commencing in 2006. Most co-op placements are offered through the Japanese External Trade Organization (JETRO) employer base. In addition, placements are also made with partnering Japanese businesses who have been long standing supporters of the Co-op Japan Program. We also expect additional placements this year with one of the largest English language schools in Japan.

The long-standing success of the Co-op Japan Program is also due to the exceptional quality of Canadian university students, the efforts of JETRO, the loyalty of participating companies in Japan and the active support of Canadian participating universities.

I look forward to working with you in the future to further develop the Co-op Japan Program. If you have any questions, I can be contacted at 604-822-6598 or [jenny.kagetsu@ubc.ca](mailto:jenny.kagetsu@ubc.ca).

Sincerely,

Jenny Kagetsu  
Director, Co-op Japan Program

## Statistics

The Co-op Japan Program is the only co-op program in the world that represents a national consortium of participating universities. Since the conception of the program in 1991, five hundred and sixty nine Canadian university undergraduate students have participated in Co-op work term opportunities in Japan.

**41** Co-op Japan Canadian undergraduate students are being hosted by 21 Japanese employers in 2005.

In 2005, forty-one Canadian undergraduate university students are working in twenty-one Japanese companies. Of the group, thirty-one are employed for 11 month internships and ten for 7 month internships; this is a 11% increase in placements over 2004.

Electrical and computer engineering opportunities for students topped the list in placement numbers in 2005 accounting for 22% of overall placements.

Year	Co-op Japan Placements
1992/93	11
1993/94	24
1994/95	23
1995/96	37
1996/97	49
1997/98	49
1998/99	56
1999/00	31
2000/01	41
2001/02	52
2002/03	67
2003/04	51
2004/05	37
2005/06	41

## Co-op Japan Discipline and Geographical Distribution

The Electrical and computer engineering students remain the most sought after by Japanese employers followed closely by computer science and engineering science students.

Discipline	Female	Male	Total
Chemical & Biological	3	0	3
Civil	1	1	2
Computer Science	0	7	7
Electrical & Computer	1	8	9
Engineering Physics	0	4	4
Engineering Science	1	5	6
Integrated	0	1	1
Materials	0	1	1
Mechanical	3	1	4
Pharmacy	1	2	3
Science	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41</b>

The majority of Co-op Japan students in 2005 are based in the Kanto (Tokyo) and Kansai (Osaka, Kyoto) regions.

Area of Japan	Number of Companies	Number of Students
Kanto	7	16
Tokai	1	2
Hokuriku	1	4
Kansai	7	13
Shikoku	1	1
Kyushu	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>



Number of Students Placed By Location

## Co-op Japan Student Salary Averages

The following Co-op Japan placement summary provides salary data from students in all participating disciplines in 2005/06. Students reported average earnings of Y146,407 per month while working for Co-op Japan employers. Wages that will be paid to the 2005/06 Co-op Japan class will total more than Y2,635,326.



Photo Courtesy of Jeff Carter

Discipline	2005 Avg. Salary (yen/month)
Chemical & Biological	126,533
Civil	150,000
Computer Science	142,857
Electrical & Computer	151,178
Engineering Physics	143,650
Engineering Science	161,417
Integrated	150,000
Materials	120,000
Mechanical	175,250
Pharmacy	160,000
Science	129,600
<b>Over an average</b>	<b>146,407</b>

## Employer Relations



Photo Courtesy of Briar Gorton

Japanese employers have shown considerable and continued support of the Co-op Japan Program over the last fourteen years. The Co-op Japan Program places a great emphasis on its relationship with Japanese employers and aims to establish long term partnerships with employers who hire our students.

Between September 26<sup>th</sup> and October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005 all 41 Co-op Japan students will be visited by Co-op Japan Program staff at their work site. Site visits from Co-op Japan Program representatives provide the opportunity of face to face discussion with employer representatives, managers and supervisors to strengthen employer, program and Co-op Japan student relationships.

## Student Relations

Students are briefed in training seminars prior to departure on their role and responsibilities during their period in the Co-op Japan Program. Such training is important as the students act as representatives of the program and their home University during their period in Japan.

Visits to each Co-op Japan student are made on site to facilitate discussion of the work environment, student responsibilities and performance, and the development of an appropriate topic for the students' technical co-op work term report.

Co-op Japan students provide feedback to the program through the evaluation of training prior to departure, phone discussions and email contact, site visits and final placement evaluations. The Co-op Japan Program maintains a strong line of communication with students from their acceptance into the program through to their completion of work term requirements.



## The Application Process

Students who meet the following criteria can apply to the Co-op Japan Program:

- Students who are from member Co-op Japan Universities,
- Students who have completed at least one Japanese language course or who have committed to completing a course prior to departure to Japan,
- Students who are flexible with respect to the type of work they are willing to accept, the duration of their work term and the they are willing to work and the geographical location in which they may be placed, and
- Students who possess a mature attitude, enthusiasm to live and work in Japan, and demonstrate a desire to learn about the Japanese culture.

## The Application Process Continued...

Once students apply to the Co-op Japan Program, their university Co-op Japan Liaison Officer provides an on-line recommendation on their application and it is reviewed by the Co-op Japan Director. Once approved by the Director, students are activated on line and have access to job posting and are eligible to apply for Co-op Japan jobs.

Students accepted in 2006 will all be required to partake in oral and written Japanese language tests where the results will be forwarded to potential employers prior to the matching phase. Once a student has accepted a position with a Co-op Japan Program employer, he or she is required to participate in a one week mandatory training week in Vancouver prior to departure. The one-week course prepares students for living and working in Japan. The course provides students with greater confidence and understanding of the Japanese culture and expectation of them as students representing a national program.

The objectives of the one week course are to provide Co-op Japan students with a working knowledge of business expectations, workplace etiquette, roles and responsibilities and overview of the Japanese culture. A Co-op Japan student is more likely to experience success in the Program with an appropriate level of preparation provided prior to departure.



*Photo Courtesy of David Shen*



## Key Industries

Co-op Japan students have worked in the following industries over the years:

- Aerospace
- Aircraft
- Artificial intelligence
- Arts
- Automotive
- Banking
- Bioinformatics
- Biomechanical
- Biomedical
- Biotechnology
- Business
- Commerce
- Construction
- Consulting
- Design
- English teaching
- Environmental
- Manufacturing
- Mineral processing
- Mining
- Oil and gas
- Petrochemical
- Pharmaceuticals
- Pulp and paper
- Research and development
- Robotics
- Semiconductor
- Software
- Structural
- Telecommunications
- Tourism
- Video gaming
- Water resources
- Web design

## Benefits

The Co-op Japan Program welcomes continued participation and new participation from interested companies in Japan. Many companies that have joined the program have indicated in evaluations that after receiving our students they have received multiple benefits including the opportunity to:

- engage in international cooperation and to provide an environment for cross-cultural and intellectual exchange amongst researchers and students,
- obtain skills from and interact with excellent young researchers and specialists to achieve productive and useful research and work results in a cost effective manner,
- learn more about Canada, its science and technology capabilities, facilitate internationalization and develop a network of contact with Canadian universities, and
- evaluate Co-op Japan students as possible candidates for full time hire after graduation.



## How to participate or learn more...

If you would like to participate in the Co-op Japan Program, or require more detailed information, please contact us at:

The Co-op Japan Program  
 c/o The University Of British Columbia  
 Engineering Annex  
 6298 Biological Sciences Road,  
 Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada  
 Phone: 604-822-6598  
 Fax: 604-822-3449  
 Email: [coop.japan@ubc.ca](mailto:coop.japan@ubc.ca)  
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