

Introduction

My name is Takashi Muranaka, a second-year junior resident. I participated in the 2025 New York Training Program. This report is aimed at readers who may be hesitant about joining—due to limited overseas experience, lack of confidence in English, or concerns about spending two weeks away from residency duties. I'll share why I joined, how I prepared, what the training was like, and what I gained from it.

About Me

I'm in my 30s, from rural Toyama Prefecture. After working in another field, I re-entered Kanazawa university to study medicine. My first time abroad was in my twenties. I'm naturally reserved. I have a wife from a non-English-speaking country (fluent in Japanese), and a one-year-old child.

Motivation for Participation

- During my first year of residency in Noto, I saw many patients from different nationalities. I felt that cross-cultural communication is essential even in Japan.
- I wanted to better understand the challenges people face when living outside their home country.
- I hope to raise my child with a global mindset, and felt I should start by developing that in myself.

Before the NY Training

The call for applicants comes in March from the education center. Don't miss it. After applying and interviewing (Zoom is available if you're based elsewhere), selected participants attend around six lectures by Dr. Andrew from June to July.

Schedules are adjusted in consultation with Dr. Andrew and fellow participants, so being at an outside hospital is not a problem.

There are many documents to prepare, and schedules change often—check notices regularly and act early. All participants share responsibilities, such as preparing gifts for training sites. To save on local costs, I recommend buying an eSIM beforehand and getting US dollars at a good rate from a currency exchange shop.

Life During the NY Training

Training ran from around 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. nearly every day. Evenings were usually free, and with summer sunsets around 7 p.m., we had time to explore.

Sessions were mainly in Manhattan, and we stayed in Midtown, so sightseeing was centered there.

We avoided issues by using location-sharing apps and moving in pairs or groups. Doing prior research into personal interests is useful—I bought English picture books for my daughter from a used bookstore on the Internet.

Training Highlights

1. Simulated Interviews at Pace University

The six-day session at Pace University was the core of the program.

The first three days featured lectures on medical interviewing by Dr. Tony, a PhD in psychology. He emphasized empathy and non-verbal communication—an encouraging approach for those less fluent in English.

The last three days involved four simulated patient interviews per day at “The Simulation Studio.” We reviewed patient backgrounds, conducted 12-minute interviews, and received feedback.

The simulated patients were professional performers, making the experience realistic and intense.

2. Lecture by Minami Yoshimizu

Ms. Yoshimizu, a Broadway actress originally from Kanazawa, shared her journey—from an ordinary girl to a performer inspired by watching the Tony Awards.

She later studied theater in the U.S. and has built a career through perseverance.

Despite setbacks, she carries herself with confidence. Over two days, she taught us the importance of showing up, being present, and facing ourselves honestly.

Her book, *“SHOW UP: Habits to Start Today,”* details her mindset and experiences.

Conclusion

I’ve often stepped out of my comfort zone, only to retreat, gradually advancing step by step into my 30s.

In terms of language and performance, I wasn’t on par with the younger trainees. That said, the experience was invaluable.

Firstly, I can now confidently encourage future trainees—or my daughter—to go abroad.

Secondly, recalling the people I met in New York, I feel braver about making life choices.

People go abroad for different reasons. Language skills help, but lack of fluency shouldn’t stop anyone.

In New York, I felt the energy of people striving to assert their value in the world.

If you want to bring that kind of forward-leaning attitude into your own career, then the NY Training Program is absolutely worth considering.

