

## **37th Symposium on Engineering in Astronomy Reflection**

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### **Abstract:**

The following is a reflection on my experience at the 37th Symposium on Engineering in Astronomy held on Kurashiki, Okayama.

On December 21-22, 2017 I had the opportunity to participate in the 37th Symposium on Engineering in Astronomy which was located in Kurashiki, Japan. My presentation was a fifteen minute presentation on the Sky Track Hoist used here on Mauna Kea at Subaru Telescope. The presentation itself allowed me to step outside my comfort zone as everyone knows I am not a public speaker. I feel that stepping outside my comfort zone and presenting was useful for my personal growth. Subaru Telescope has provided me numerous opportunities in which I have been challenged to step outside of my comfort zone and grow as an individual. Although I was nervous during my presentation, it was a great opportunity. Many participants asked great questions following the presentation itself.

At the symposium the language barrier made communicating with other participants somewhat difficult. I found the use of pictures as well as captions useful in breaking the language barrier. I plan on brushing up on my Japanese for future presentations. What I found useful for me was networking with others in the Astronomy field. At the presentation I was able to see others who I have met here in Hawai'i at Subaru Telescope. It was interesting to see them in their various elements. Meeting various individuals and understanding their roles in their particular jobs in the astronomy field was interesting. I

usually only see the hands on mechanical side of the the telescope. Seeing everyone's different role gave me a better appreciation for everyone's hard work. Everyone has their own role to make this job successful.

There was a portion of the symposium where each discussed problems we each face in our different job areas. We needed to discuss the problem as well as possible solutions to the problems. I was able to see that in each of our job areas we encounter problems that needs brainstorming in order to be solved. The problems were specific to each person's role. In the end it made me realize the importance of my role in my job. I was unable to help them solve their problems and they were unable to help me solve the problem I discussed.

Another interesting part of the symposium was viewing of the Okayama telescope. We travelled as a group by bus to view the telescope. For me this was interesting because I was able to see a vintage telescope that is still functional. Although this telescope is still functional the technology is outdated and therefore they are building a newer telescope which will be completed soon. The cool thing about the newer telescope that is being built is that it operates similar to our telescope here at Mauna Kea, but on a smaller scale.

I am grateful for the learning opportunity and experiences that I received by participating in the 37th Symposium on Engineering in Astronomy. I found this symposium to be very useful for my professional growth. During the trip I was able to take personal time to view the Okayama Castle as well as other sights in Japan. For me this was a meaningful opportunity to learn more about the Japanese culture. I also visited Korakuen Gardens with my co-worker. I am f=grateful for this opportunity to participate in this symposium as well as the opportunity to learn more about the culture of Japan.