

#This is AFSEffect.

Hearing stories from people involved with AFS This time, we spoke with Linda C. Ehrlich, a university professor who has published numerous works on Japanese films and traditional theater. Linda was born and raised in the United States and came to Japan in 1968 as one of the early AFS students. At the time, it wasn't possible to choose the country of assignment, as is the case today, and going to Japan, a country unfamiliar to her, was "very shocking." She was assigned to Sakaide, Kagawa Prefecture, where foreigners were rare, and she felt intimidated by the stares of those around her every time she went outside. However, she says that the people of Sakaide, including her host family and high school, were very kind. " My host family took me to the Awa Odori festival in Tokushima and planned a trip to Kyoto for me. They also invited me to a formal tea ceremony. At high school, I enjoyed watching the kendo and kyudo club activities. I was in the hiking club." Among these experiences, one in particular stands out in her memory. " I took a ferry with my host brother on the Seto Inland Sea at dusk. It was foggy, but small islands appeared here and there from within. The scenery was magical and very mystical."

This experience in Japan became a turning point that would greatly change her life. After returning home, Linda stayed in Japan again for an extended period and went on to become a specialist in Japanese art studies. " That short experience had a huge impact on my life. Thanks to [AFS](#) , my life and Japan are intertwined." A small step in a foreign country eventually led to a big story that colored her life . [#thisisAFSEffect](#) [#AFSersInAge](#) [#HighSchoolStudyAbroad](#)

[@afs_usa](#) [@afsprograms](#)Linda 's website:
<https://braidednarrative.com/>