

Los Angeles Times

Japanese leader Shinzo Abe visits USC, where he was a student

By Larry Gordon

Heading home from a weeklong visit to the U.S., Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stopped off Saturday morning for a nostalgic tour of USC, where he was a student in the 1970s.

The brief visit to USC was Abe's final event in the United States before he headed to Los Angeles International Airport, after a week of diplomacy and economic discussions.

USC president C. L. Max Nikias escorted Abe around the campus and presented him with a USC letterman's jacket inscribed with his name. Abe also met with faculty at the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture.



USC president C. L. Max Nikias, *left*, escorts Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on campus. Their wives Akie Abe and Niki C. Nikias are next to them. *Photo by Gus Ruelas*

Earlier in the week, Abe addressed a joint session of Congress and was the guest of honor at a state dinner at the White House. On Thursday, he participated in a public forum at Stanford University about technological innovation. Abe visited Los Angeles' Little Tokyo on Friday and spoke at a downtown luncheon about economic development.

Abe's visit to USC was his first time on campus in almost 40 years, officials said. It was considered a private event and was not announced publicly in advance.

Abe had spent three semesters as a visiting student studying English and taking courses in political science, international relations and history.

AP

Japan prime minister ends US visit

May 2, 2015



(left) Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe tries on a personalized USC letterman's jacket, a gift from USC President C. L. Max Nikias. *(right)* Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, *right*, is introduced to his former University of Southern California professor Thomas Johnson, *left*, by USC President C. L. Max Nikias, *center*, as Abe's wife Akie Abe and Nikias' wife Niki C. Nikias look on at right. *Photos by Gus Ruelas*



LOS ANGELES (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has ended his weeklong visit to the U.S. with a tour of the University of Southern California, where he was a student in the 1970s.

The *Los Angeles Times* reports (<http://lat.ms/1GR69Gt>) the brief visit on Saturday

morning was Abe's final event in the United States before heading home.

Abe had spent three semesters at USC studying English and taking courses in political science, international relations and history.

University officials escorted him around

the campus and presented him with a USC letterman's jacket inscribed with his name.

Earlier in the week, Abe addressed a joint session of Congress and was the guest of honor at a state dinner at the White House. He also held economic discussions in Silicon Valley and Los Angeles.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits USC

Visit to the university he attended in the 1970s wraps up a week of historic diplomacy across the U.S.



During his visit, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe received a USC letterman's jacket from USC President C. L. Max Nikias. *Photo by Gus Ruelas*

By Carl Marziali

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan could not leave the U.S. without returning to USC.

Abe stopped at the University Park Campus on his way to Los Angeles International Airport on May 2, after a week of historic diplomacy that included a state dinner at the White House and the first address by a Japanese prime minister to a joint session of Congress.

It was Abe's first time on campus in almost 40 years. He spent three semesters here in 1978 studying English and taking courses in political science, international relations and history.

On this visit, Abe strolled around a campus transformed by recent growth with the leader responsible for much of that growth, USC President C. L. Max Nikias.

In honor of Abe's visit, Nikias presented

the prime minister with a USC letterman's jacket inscribed to "Shinzo Abe."

"We are so proud to count Prime Minister Abe among USC's most illustrious alumni, as his many accomplishments bring tremendous honor to the university," Nikias said.

"We are also proud of our university's long and storied relationship with Japan. Japanese students were among USC's first classes in the 1880s, and we have had a Japanese Student Association on campus since 1910."

Abe also met with staff and faculty at the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture, and reconnected with old professor Thomas Johnson, who now teaches at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey and came to greet his star student.

Abe's visit held special significance for

the Shinso Ito Center, one of only seven institutes for Japan studies at American universities. Founded in 2011 under director Duncan Williams, associate professor of religion in the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the center seeks to promote the study of Japanese religions and culture at USC and in the broader community of Japan studies.

"It's a good moment to have a prime minister visit a Japan center and encourage an optimistic future for Japan studies. It's an important historical visit," Williams said. "USC is one of those schools that has had a long and enduring relationship to Japan."

Abe is not the only Japanese prime minister to have attended USC. Takeo Miki, who led the country from 1974 to 1976, was a student at USC in the 1930s.