

# 2013 TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program



## Executive Summary

The TOMODACHI Initiative sincerely thanks Mitsui & Co., Ltd. for the opportunity to develop an innovative U.S.-Japan leadership program that inspires, motivates, and engages a diverse set of young professional leaders in the U.S.-Japan relationship. This program set out to recruit participants for whom this could potentially be a transformative experience. We sought out young professionals from areas across the United States and Japan and fields that did not necessarily have strong U.S.-Japan exchange opportunities. We focused on young professionals (under 35, generally), with various level of experience with U.S.-Japan relations, each selected for their leadership potential and their passion to learn more about the relationship. We recruited both men and women, and we set an additional challenge of strong English language skills for the Japanese participants. This may have been very ambitious criteria, but we were thrilled by the quality and energy of both delegations. We have been impressed by the impact we've already seen for many of the participants. We look forward to building on Year One of the program over the next two years to continue to improve the program, and to build a network of young leaders across our two countries.

## Program Overview

The TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program is designed to inspire and motivate the next generation of young American and Japanese leaders to be active in U.S.-Japan relations. This bicultural experience provides outstanding young professionals with unique access to leaders and counterparts in the U.S.-Japan arena, along with the opportunity to broaden their perspectives in ways

that could enhance their work or support initiatives in their professional fields.

Generously funded by Mitsui & Co., Ltd., the TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program is one of the TOMODACHI Initiative's first to expand participation outside of the Tohoku region (although Fukushima Prefecture was included to ensure that the link to Tohoku was not lost). One of the most distinct characteristics was our emphasis on geographic diversity through targeted recruiting in locations outside of the capitals. U.S. participants hailed from Chicago, Detroit, Honolulu, San Jose, and Seattle; Japanese joined from Fukushima, Hiroshima, Okinawa, Saga, and Shizuoka prefectures. Geographic diversity serves to bring new leaders into the relationship, and also to allow the professional connections and lessons from the program to be shared in ways that can directly contribute to local and regional economies, while providing participants opportunities to explore topics more relevant to their work to support local and regional economies. Additionally, the delegations visited one participating prefecture (Hiroshima) and city (Seattle) during their visits to ensure their exposure went beyond the capitals. This geographic diversity was something the U.S. Embassy leadership strongly felt was missing in the U.S.-Japan relationship, and builds on broader efforts by the U.S.-Japan Council to strengthen U.S.-Japan connections at these regional levels.

The Year One program was designed around a theme of, "Trade and Economic Adjustment" and given the timely upturn in the Japanese economy, we further defined this theme adding the title, "The Case for Japan's Turnaround in 2013" for the American Delegation's trip to Japan and developed the lineup of speakers and events supporting this theme. In the United States, we leveraged destination strengths and focused on speakers from the business sector in Seattle, and government in Washington D.C.

Given the fact that program participants are leaders and professionals active in their respective fields, to keep them motivated and engaged, conscious efforts were made to develop schedules and meeting agendas using the following guidelines:

- select and advise participating speakers that our groups thrive on dialogue versus sitting and listening to speeches;
- limit presentations to 90 minutes with at least 30 minutes allocated for Q&A;
- find balance of presentations representing government and business sectors;
- listen to delegate feedback during orientation about topics they were most interested during their upcoming trips; and,
- add complementing cultural activities that encourage networking and bonding amongst participants and guests in informal settings.

Over the course of the program, American and Japanese delegations met with specialists in their fields as well as top and up-and coming government and business leaders. This allowed for engaging discussions on areas including trade, energy, infrastructure, and technology areas of U.S.-Japan cooperation. Both delegations also enjoyed a number of cultural activities to increase their appreciation for the other country, and to ensure a truly memorable visit. Perhaps most importantly, the program's design allowed participants developed a close connection with fellow delegates, establishing new relationships, broadening professional networks, and connecting with peers with shared values and interests—especially within their own delegation.

We have already seen direct outcomes in terms of new professional opportunities for some participants; at the U.S.-Japan Council's October 4, 2013 Annual Conference, one participant spoke on a leadership panel and explained to the audience that she attributes a recent job promotion to the experience she had on the delegation; when she visited Japan later on a work-related trip, another participant reconnected with professional contacts in Japan forged during the program; and one of the Japanese participants has begun networking for a new job more closely related to U.S.-Japan relations. Our three Seattle delegates were also very helpful in setting up the schedule and hosting the Japanese delegation when they visited Seattle. Two of the American participants also joined the Japanese delegation for their meetings in Washington, DC. Three delegates from Saga conducted a program to share their lessons with their government colleagues. This event was held on October 18,

and 30 staff members, including the Governor, joined. After listening to the session, the Governor expressed his appreciation to the three delegates for participating and he emphasized the importance of U.S.-Japan relations.



Presentation by Saga Prefecture delegates



Governor Yasushi Furukawa addresses the group

We are confident that the more we empower these young leaders, the more they will build on this experience in ways such as above. Here are some of their comments:

*“I am very impressed by the level of organization and planning that went into the TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program. Passionate about U.S.-Japan relations, we all want to continue contributing to the TOMODACHI Initiative and through this program, creating real change.”* Kay Fukunaga

*“The TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program has a lot of potential and I commend TOMODACHI, the U.S.-Japan Council, and Mitsui & Company on having the foresight to invest in this type of program.”* Neepaporn ‘A’ Boungiakatha

*“My life has changed forever thanks to the people I’ve met as a result of the TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program!”* Asuka Jenkins

*“A lot of people I’ve spoken to about the TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program are very interested in applying next year!”* Mariko Saigo

*“I hope we are able to continue the dialogue with our Japanese counterparts and future delegations and propose organizing a summit after three years with the first three groups of American and Japanese delegations. In this way, the network expands dramatically and offers a new forum for reviewing and discussing current and future challenges.”* John Holman

### **Meet the American Delegation**

Following their two-day orientation program in Los Angeles, the American delegation traveled to Hiroshima and Tokyo on July 27 - August 3.



Orientation at the Japanese American National Museum



Dinner reception hosted by Consul General Jun Niimi

### **Meet the Japanese Delegation**

Following their orientation program in Tokyo on August 2-3, the Japanese delegation traveled to Seattle, Washington and Washington D.C. on September 8-16.



Orientation in Tokyo on August 2-3



Dinner reception at DCM Kurt Tong's residence

### **The Exchange Visits**

Los Angeles (June 6-7)

USJC President Irene Hirano Inouye led the orientation, which was held in Los Angeles, California at the Japanese American National Museum. The venue offered an opportunity to touch on the history of Japanese-Americans in the United States and their many contributions to U.S.-Japan relations as an example of the value of diversity in the relationship. Held over two days (Attachment C), the program served to provide updates and views by specialists on current economic and trade issues in Japan as well as a general introduction to culture awareness as a number of delegates would be traveling to Japan for the first time.

Hiroshima (July 27 – 30)

Wet weather during the first full day dedicated to cultural activities in Hiroshima could not dampen the spirits of the visiting American delegation. Monday, the first official day of activities launched by meeting with Hiroshima Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki, followed by business presentations and tours at Mazda, Mitsubishi Electric Smart Meter Factory, and Chugoku Electric Mega Solar (Attachment D lists the full schedule). A tour and business strategy presentation the next day by the owners of the Kamoizumi Sake Brewery was an example of a Japanese company successfully expanding business in the United States.



Miyajima Island



Itsukushima Shrine



Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki



Mazda Factory



Mitsubishi Electric Smart Meter Factory

Tokyo (July 30 – August 3)

Speakers and activities in Tokyo began with an interactive general briefing on bilateral relations in collaboration with four sections in the U.S.-Embassy – Tokyo and ended three days later on Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> with a dinner reception hosted by Kurt Tong, Deputy Chief of Mission – Embassy of the United States – Tokyo, at his residence attended by nearly 100 participants and guests.



U.S. Embassy – Tokyo



Yusei Higaki, Project Manager – Green Technology  
TOYOTA Motors Corporation



Rakugo Artist Shinoharu Tatekawa



ACCJ – Women in Business Committee



Jesper Koll, Japan Director of Research – J.P. Morgan



Tatsuo Nishimoto, Deputy GM Mitsubishi Real Estate  
Urban Renewal Project: Otemachi-Marunouchi-Yurakucho

Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> was also the first day of the Japanese delegation's orientation program and first opportunity for both delegations to meet followed by joint activities all afternoon and evening. Their orientation program (Attachment E) ended the next day with presentations on current economic and political issues in the United States presented by two Japanese experts on U.S.-Japan relations.



Kenichi Hori, GM of Corporate Planning & Strategy  
Mitsui & Company



Mio Yamaguchi, Manager of Strategic Planning,  
Energy Business Unit - Mitsui & Company



Group shot at Mitsui & Company HDQ



Dinner reception at Kurt Tong's residence  
Sake sommelier Carlin Kumada marketing sake from each of the 5 prefectures



Big thank you to DCM Kurt Tong and John Nylin, Senior Advisor to former Ambassador John Roos



Naoyuki Agawa, Faculty of Policy Management  
Keio University



Nobuo Yoneyama, President  
Nissin Global Corporation

Seattle (September 8 – 11)

The Japanese delegation arrived in Seattle and began a full two-days' of engagement with speakers/organizations focused on the business sectors (Attachment F). They were joined by three members of the American delegation at an informal reception attended by special guests including Senior Consul Tomoko Dodo – Consulate General of Japan.



U.S. Commercial Services and Trade Development Alliance



Washington Interactive Network





Dreamlining at the Boeing factory



Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

September 19, 2013 Vol. 68, Issue 39 平成 25 年 9 月 19 日 木曜日発行 第 68 巻 39 号

# 北米報知

SERVING AS YOUR VOICE OF THE NIKKEI COMMUNITY SINCE 1902

## The North American Post

### 日米の若手リーダーシップを育成 シアトルで大きな刺激 地方、海外で結ぶネットワーク

シアトル・マリナーズ戦を観戦するトモダチ・イニシアチブ関係者たち。

非営利団体「米日カウンシル」と米政府による日米交流事業「トモダチ・イニシアチブ」の環で、三井物産が後援する若手リーダーシップ育成プログラム参加者が、シアトルで1週間、強いつながりを築いた。

このプログラムは、産業界、政府関係者、学術界、市民社会などから選ばれた若手リーダーが、米国と日本を往復しながら、地方や海外で結ぶネットワークを築いていく。このプログラムは、産業界、政府関係者、学術界、市民社会などから選ばれた若手リーダーが、米国と日本を往復しながら、地方や海外で結ぶネットワークを築いていく。

「日本と似ている部分でも、違う発想や考え方がある。幼果的な意見交換ができています。」

「日本からは東京、福岡、静岡、広島、佐賀、沖縄から10名が参加。佐賀大の学講師の松原あかねさんは、大都市圏と異なる、地方同士、海外を含めた外側同士のネットワークの強化を図り、地方におけるイノベーションを創出する。」

米日カウンシルの代表、マリア・方蔵和志、副代表、高重美、非営利団体、東京市の若手リーダー、それぞれが、それぞれのコミュニティにどういった貢献ができるかを模索しあっていた。

自己肯定感を育む

東京市場 円ノル相場 98円25銭

記者・写真 II 佐木 壽雄

著 精神科 14日 15日 16日 17日 18日 19日 20日 21日 22日 23日 24日 25日 26日 27日 28日 29日 30日 31日

Thank you to the Seattle Mariners' baseball organization for the complimentary stadium suites

Washington D.C. (September 11 – 15)  
 Activities in Washington D.C. began with a breakfast meeting facilitated by Irene Hirano Inouye, President – U.S.-Japan Council, attended by USJC leadership and two counterpart American delegates. After two full days of meetings with a range of high-level specialists with extensive knowledge and experience in U.S.-Japan relations that included amongst others, Richard Armitage former U.S. Ambassador – Japan and Richard Danzig, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees – Rand Corporation, the Japanese delegates ended their week with a dinner reception graciously hosted by Minister Hideaki Mizukoshi.



Meeting the U.S.-Japan leadership and staff



Former U.S. Ambassador Richard Armitage



Japanese delegation's last day in Washington D.C.



Joining hands in commitment to U.S.- Japan bicultural exchange

Finally, there are many individuals and organizations that should be recognized for their support of this program. First and foremost, we appreciate the support, commitment, and involvement of Mr. Sachio Kobayashi, as well as the wonderful introductions and suggestions from Ms. Yumi Yamaguchi, both of Mitsui & Co., Ltd. We also particularly recognize the staff at the U.S. Embassies and Consulates in Japan and each of the five prefectural government offices for their help with recruitment in Japan; the Hiroshima Prefectural Government Foreign Business Division and International Affairs Division for helping us develop the schedule and agenda in Hiroshima; Mitsui USA in Los Angeles, Seattle, and Washington D.C., and the Trade Development Office of Greater Seattle for their support of our schedule in Seattle. Finally, we are grateful to the energetic and engaged delegates from Japan and the United States, whose enthusiasm and passion inspire us as we continue to build on this excellent program.



## TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program

### American Delegation



**ROBERT CORDER (Chicago, IL)**  
**Business Development Project Coordinator**  
**Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)**

Robert Corder holds a BA in International Relations focusing on Japan from American University in Washington, DC. From 2003-2006, Robert participated in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, where he taught high school English in Fukuoka prefecture. In 2007, he joined the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the Japanese government's economic development agency. JETRO's mission is to promote trade & investment between Japan and the rest of the world. At JETRO, Robert works with American companies as they expand and grow their business in Japan as well as Japanese companies seeking to do business in the US.

Robert assists companies in a wide range of industries, including automotive & advanced manufacturing, medical devices & biotechnology, clean/green technology, retail and business services. In addition, Robert is the president of Chicago's JET Program Alumni Association (JETAA Chicago) and an active member in the Japan America Society of Chicago (JASC).



**NAOMI HATTORI (Chicago, IL)**  
**Tourism Sales Manager**  
**Choose Chicago**

Naomi Hattori is a tourism sales manager at Choose Chicago, where she oversees Chicago's tourism sales and marketing efforts in Japan and China. Prior to joining Chicago's convention and tourism bureau, Ms. Hattori served as a communications and international program manager at Chicago Sister Cities International (CSCI). In this role, she managed cultural programming and professional exchanges between Chicago and its Sister Cities of Osaka, Japan, Shanghai and Shenyang, China and Busan, Korea. Ms. Hattori has lived and worked abroad in both China and Thailand. She is proficient in Mandarin Chinese and Thai and is currently learning Japanese. Ms. Hattori holds a B.A. in psychology from Carleton College.



**ANDREA NICHOLS (Clarkston, MI)**  
**Global Sales Manager**  
**Android Industries, LLC**

Andrea Nichols works for Android Industries, an automotive assembly integrator and global supply chain manager headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan - USA. She is Android's Global Sales Manager for tire and wheel technology and assembly. Andrea is focused on diversifying Android's customer base, seeking growth opportunities in global markets. She is currently working with Japanese automakers in North America, including Toyota, Subaru, and Nissan, to introduce Android's tire and wheel technology and innovation as a new business solution for these potential customers. She has specifically focused on new business development in North America and Europe, and is beginning of the process for growth in Asia Pacific. Andrea graduated from Miami University with degrees in International Relations and Spanish. She also studied at La Universidad Complutense de Madrid and at Parsons Paris.



**ANTHONY L. RAY (Novi, MI)**  
**Attorney**  
**Ray Law International, P.C.**

Anthony L. Ray was born in Detroit, Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan where he obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Japanese. After completing his degree, he had the opportunity to live and work in Japan for two years. Thereafter, he attained his Juris Doctor's degree from the Wayne State University Law School in Detroit, Michigan. During his legal studies, he participated in an internship with a Japanese company in Tokyo, Japan.

Mr. Ray has extensive experience in the area of Immigration Law. He has well over a decade of experience working with corporations, professionals, and families to meet their immigration needs and goals both here in the United States and abroad.



**JOHN HOLMAN (Honolulu, HI)**  
**Director, Pacific**  
**U.S. Commercial Service, U. S. Department of Commerce**

John Holman currently serves as the Director of the Pacific for the U.S. Commercial Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce. In this capacity, John manages the Hawaii Export Assistance Center in downtown Honolulu. The mission of the Commercial Service is to assist companies in selling their products or services in international markets.

Prior to his current position in Honolulu, John served as a Senior International Trade Specialist at Commerce headquarters in Washington D.C. John has also served overseas as a Foreign Service Officer on temporary assignments in Beijing, China and Singapore.

John joined the Department after completing his Masters of Business Administration (MBA) at San Diego State University. While at SDSU, John established a study abroad program in Melbourne, Australia. He graduated *summa cum laude* from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's degree in Business and Psychology.



**KAY FUKUNAGA (Honolulu, HI)**  
**Director of Hawai'i State Affairs**  
**NextEra Energy Hawai'i**

Kay Fukunaga is the Director of Hawai'i State Affairs for NextEra Energy, a leading provider of clean energy. In this capacity, Kay is focused on developing renewable energy resources and transmission solutions. Kay previously evaluated venture capital and private equity investments in energy, and prior to that, worked as a valuation specialist in high profile antitrust and intellectual property disputes. Kay's pro bono projects have included assisting with a United Nations exhibit, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit, and U.S. bilateral trade relations. She serves on the Board of Governors of the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council, the Investment Board of Punawai 'O Pu'uuhonua, a collaborative new markets tax credits program aimed at encouraging investment in underprivileged communities especially in the areas of renewable energy and agriculture, the Steering Committee for the U.S.-Japan Council's Clean Tech Strategic Working Group, and the Board of Directors of the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i where she will be focused on environmental sustainability initiatives. In 2011, Kay was selected as a member of the 13th class of Pacific Century Fellows, Hawai'i's version of the White House Fellows Program. In 2012, Pacific Business News named Kay one of 40 outstanding business leaders under the age of 40. Kay holds an MBA from the Harvard Business School, and an undergraduate degree in Economics and English with honors from Dartmouth College.



**JOSHUA KAGAN (San Francisco, CA)**  
**Global Operation Lead – Energy Efficiency**  
**Carbon War Room**

Joshua Kagan is the Carbon War Room's Global Operation Lead for energy efficiency in the built environment. Joshua manages a team focused on developing and implementing large-scale energy efficiency transactions in global cities like Washington DC, London, Vilnius, Melbourne and Singapore. Prior to the War Room, Joshua was a Senior Analyst with the clean tech investment firm Atlas Capital Investments and a Fellow with the Prometheus Institute for Sustainable Development. Joshua also co-founded The NOW Project – a social enterprise that created organic apparel and accessory products and utilized the proceeds to fund yoga classes for at-risk teens in public schools in southern California. Joshua has consulted for Gerson Lehrman Group and Greentech Media and has lectured on alternative energy economics at UC Berkeley. He was lead author on the 300+ page biofuels report "Biofuels 2010: Spotting the Next Wave" and is the sole author of "Third and Fourth-Generation Biofuels: Technologies, Markets, and Economics Through 2015." Joshua holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and Bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut.



**NEEPAPORN BOUNGJAKTHA (Seattle, WA)**  
**Vice President**  
**Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle**

Neepaporn Boungjaktha (nickname "A") has experience in facilitating and strengthening international trade and business relations in the Greater Seattle region and beyond. She has been in the international trade and business industry for over ten years working with the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle, which is a partnership of business, government, education,

ports and labor promoting metro Seattle's international business interests. During her tenure at the Trade Development Alliance, "A" has traveled to more than 10 countries and has worked with over 40 countries promoting Greater Seattle region as a place for doing international business and trade.

"A"'s community service includes professionally serving on the board of Port Jobs and personally with CISC (Chinese Information Service Center). "A" has also been a long time supporter of Camp Goodtimes, a regional camp for children with cancer and their siblings.

Neepaporn Bougiaktha has a bachelor's degree from the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington.



**SEPTEMBER SECRIST (Seattle, WA)**  
**Senior International Trade Specialist**  
**Global Healthcare Team Leader**  
**U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce**

September Secrist is a Senior International Trade Specialist with the U.S. Commercial Service, the export promotion agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce. She works with companies in the life sciences, biotechnology, and medical, laboratory, and scientific equipment industry sectors in Washington to find international markets for their products and services. September began working for the Commercial Service in 2002 and is currently the Global Healthcare Team leader, responsible for coordinating industry outreach

activities for 175 trade and commercial specialists based around the world. September serves as the advisory board chair for the Center for International Business Education and Research at the University of Washington, and also serves as a board director for Menorah, a nonprofit dedicated to international reconciliation projects. September received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwest University in Business Administration and completed her Master of Arts degree through the Naval War College in National Security and Strategic Studies in 2012.



**KENDEE YAMAGUCHI (Seattle, WA)**  
**Assistant Director of Local Government and Infrastructure**  
**Washington State Department of Commerce**

Kendee Yamaguchi is an Assistant Attorney General. In 2013, she was appointed by Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson to serve as a member on his senior leadership team as the Director of Policy, Legislative Affairs and External Relations. Previously, she served as a Small Agency Cabinet member for the Governor and a director in the Office of Management and Administration at the White House. She has experience working as a television executive for one of the world's largest networks, a staff member in the Legislature and an attorney in private practice. She is the recipient of awards from the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association and the Access to Justice Institute. She also serves as a Commissioner on the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission and a Board of Trustee for the Intiman Theatre. Yamaguchi earned a bachelor's degree in political science and public communications with a minor in international affairs from American University. She is also a recipient of the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship (PPIA) and earned a juris doctorate from the Seattle University School of Law.



## TOMODACHI-Mitsui & Co. Leadership Program

### Japanese Delegation



**Hiroyuki Karahashi (Kitakata City, Fukushima Prefecture)**  
**President**  
**Homare Sake Brewery**

Hiroyuki Karahashi is President of Homare Sake Brewery, one of the leading sake breweries located in Fukushima Prefecture. Since joining the company in 2004, he has served in several leadership positions before being promoted to its President in 2011 where he directs their growth strategy to increase sake consumption domestically, in the United States and countries of the world.

Mr. Karahashi is also active in local community activities and as President of Junior Chamber International – Aizu Kitakata, passionately supports community, youth education, and leadership development. He envisions establishing global networks as a key to bringing young leaders in world communities together to share responsibility to discuss and address common global issues.

Mr. Karahashi graduated from Seijo University – Tokyo with a BA in Economics and earned his MBA in Finance from the University of San Francisco.



**Toshiyuki Saito (Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture)**  
**Senior Staff, Organization Management Division**  
**Fukushima Prefectural Government**

Toshiyuki Saito entered the Fukushima Prefectural Government in 2000 in the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Department and over the past 13 years was assigned to various departments and postings including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Tokyo and Embassy of Japan - Philippines. He is currently Senior Staff, Organization Management Division, General Administration Department.

He was assigned to the Nuclear Damage Countermeasure Task Force immediately following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 and remains committed to Fukushima Prefecture's recovery and contributing to a brighter and more promising future.

Mr. Saito graduated from Chuo University with a BA in Economics and resides in Fukushima City.





**Yohei Kubota (Minami City, Hiroshima Prefecture)  
Manager, Fuel Planning & Oil Purchasing Section  
Chugoku Electric Power Co., Inc.**

Yohei Kubota is a Manager for Fuel Planning & Oil Purchasing Section – Chugoku Electric Power Co. Inc. His section adheres to the company's mandate to provide a stable supply of electric power while continually improving business efficiency to support the 'best mix' for power source configuration. He joined the company in 2003 in the Sales Division before moving to Coal Purchasing & Management.

Mr. Kubota graduated from Hiroshima University with a BA in Economics and spent 5 years living in New York City in his childhood that served to shape his views on American culture and U.S.-Japan relations.



**Naoto Ishida (Hatsukaichi City, Hiroshima Prefecture)  
Manager, Foreign Business Section, Commerce, Industry, & Labor  
Bureau  
Hiroshima Prefectural Government**

Naoto Ishida joined the Hiroshima Prefectural Government in 2003 and is currently Manager, Foreign business section, Commerce, Industry & Labor Bureau where his responsibilities focus on assisting automobile companies launch and establish business in foreign markets and promoting overseas investments in Hiroshima Prefecture.

Previously, Mr. Ishida gained valuable experience over 10 years through assignments in the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Bureau, Regional Tax Office, and Health & Welfare Bureau. In 2012, he was part of a team that developed a bilateral business seminar on clean energy policies between the Hiroshima Prefecture and the State of Hawaii.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Kyoto University.



**Asuka Jenkins (Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture)  
Brand Manager  
Tulip Food Company Japan Ltd.**

Asuka Jenkins has always been engaged in international business and is currently Brand Manager, responsible for product placement and promotion in Okinawa for Tulip Food Company Japan Ltd., a company headquartered in Denmark.

She has a keen interest in local politics and impact of U.S.-Japan relations and in her spare time is an active alumnus of the American Exchange Program Alumni of Okinawa (AEP AO). She has served as a volunteer at study abroad, presidential election program, and other USA focused symposiums.

Ms. Jenkins graduated from Osaka University with a degree in Foreign Studies and earned her MBA in International Relations.



**Yukiko Soejima (Saga City, Saga Prefecture)**  
**Manager, Education Information Technology Promotion Office,**  
**Board of Education**  
**Saga Prefectural Government**

Yukiko Soejima currently holds a position as Manager, Education Information Technology Promotion Office, Board of Education Saga Prefecture Government where she is responsible for procurement of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) devices for education and education related statistical surveys. Joining the Saga Prefectural Government in 1996, she has held positions in the River and Sediment Control Division, Social Welfare, Public Relations, Tourism, and International Affairs.

While in the International Affairs Division she was the Project Manager overseeing the JET program in Saga Prefecture facilitating discussions and seminars to support participants to deal with new circumstances.

Ms. Soejima graduated from Kyushu University with a degree in Economics and resides in Honjo-machi, Saga City.



**Akane Matsumae (Saga City, Saga Prefecture)**  
**Lecturer - Organization for Cooperation - Industry & Regional**  
**Community**  
**Saga University**

Akane Matsumae is currently, Lecturer of Organization for Cooperation with Industry and Regional Community at Saga University in charge of entrepreneurship education and research-development coordination. She also helps the public sector to empower local SMEs for overseas expansion as an associate of a global investor based in Singapore and Shanghai.

Ms. Matsumae is active in designing and mentoring innovative clusters of diverse people and SMEs in Japan, and is currently a judge for national subsidies to promote business startups.

She earned a Masters degree in Engineering from the Tokyo Institute of Technology and later attained her Juris Doctor's degree from Kyushu University. She also has experience and knowledge of NPO activities and is on the board of directors for Terra People Association – Saga Prefecture.



**Yasuyuki Tsutsumi (Saga City, Saga Prefecture)**  
**Manager, Public Projects Construction Office**  
**Saga Prefectural Government**

Yasuyuki Tsutsumi is currently Project Director, Global Strategy Group responsible to develop government and business relations between Saga Prefecture and the United States. In 2012, Mr. Tsutsumi was the Project Manager for the U.S.-Japan Council Governor's Meeting, designed to promote economic exchange between Saga Prefecture and the State of Hawaii.

Previously, Mr. Tsutsumi was assigned to the Information Technology Division responsible to develop and provide broadband service in rural areas and promoting the arrival of digitalized TV and Cable TV companies across the region.

He entered Saga Prefectural Government in the Public Project Construction Office – Saga Prefectural Government where he was responsible for contract negotiations of public works projects including road and highway construction.

He is a graduate of Hiroshima University with a BA in Literature.



**Shigenobu Kimura (Shizuoka City, Shizuoka Prefecture)  
Manager, Strategic Planning and Public Relations, Administrative  
Division  
Shizuoka Prefectural Government**

Shigenobu Kimura entered the Shizuoka Prefectural Government in 2009 assigned to the Shimizu Port Authority – Transportation Infrastructure Department, responsible to expand and strengthen the handling functions of international ocean containers to drive competitiveness in both domestic and international markets. He was also assigned to the Nursing Care Insurance Division & Welfare Department before moving to his current position.

As Assistant Manager, Strategic Planning and Public Relations, his division is tasked with addressing administrative issues related to Information, Statistics, Regional Diplomacy and Policy Planning of the Prefecture.

Mr. Kimura graduated from the University of Shizuoka with a degree in International Languages and Cultures and resides in Shizuoka City.



**Mariko Saigo (Setagaya, Tokyo Prefecture)  
Executive Management Coach  
Coach A Co., Ltd.**

Mariko Saigo is an Executive Management/business development Coach for a COACH A. In addition to providing motivational training to executives for leadership development, she manages a team of 8 people, focused on working with multinational organizations for business development.

After majoring in Political Science with a Law degree from Keio University, she joined J.P.Morgan Chase Bank - Tokyo and worked in collaboration with senior relationship managers to meet the specific needs of JP Morgan's key Japanese clients. She also relocated to manage projects in Hong Kong and in Singapore responsible for implementing strategic initiatives within country offices.

Mariko Saigo is an active member of the American Chamber of Commerce Japan (ACCJ) and recently participated as a speaker at a leadership workshop hosted by the Women in Business Committee.