



JAPAN
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Japan's Burgeoning Impact on Houston Focus of Upcoming Conference

HOUSTON, TX (January xx, 2018) – Japan's escalated investment in Houston, from financing of the Texas bullet train to the more than 150 Japanese-affiliated companies now in the Bayou City manufacturing products ranging from air conditioning systems to coatings for laundry detergent pods, will be on full display when the Japan-America Society of Houston presents its Japan Update Conference on Friday, January 26.

The third annual conference exploring Japanese investment in Houston and the Lone Star State will be held at the Petroleum Club, 1201 Louisiana, starting at 11:30 a.m.

Featuring presentations by Shinya Miyake, Regional Head for the Americas, Japan Bank for International Cooperation; Carlos Aguilar, CEO of Texas Central Partners, developer of the Houston-to-Dallas high-speed train; Norman Bafunno, Chief Competitiveness Officer for Toyota Motor North America; and Takeshi Ebisu, President and CEO of Daikin's Goodman Global Group, the luncheon will provide the most comprehensive look at the scope of Japan's influence in the region as the second-largest foreign investment market for Houston, outpaced only by the United Kingdom.

"Japan's impact on Houston in terms of jobs, exports and investments tends to fly under the radar," notes William Weiland, president of the Japan-America Society of Houston, now in its 50th year of advancing the mutual interest of American and Japanese peoples. "The reality is Japanese businesses can be found in almost every sector of Houston's economy."

Between 2010 and 2015, Japanese-affiliated businesses in Houston grew by more than 34 percent. During the same time span, total trade between Houston and Japan grew from \$2.2 billion to \$5.1 billion.

There are currently 156 Japanese-affiliated companies in the Houston area, according to the 2017 Japan Business Association of Houston directory.

In 2015, Texas exported more than \$8.6 billion of goods and services to Japan, second only to California, according to a 2015 report by the East-West Center in Washington D.C. The same

report shows Japan as the fourth-largest creator of U.S. jobs from trade after Canada, Mexico, and China, including more than 46,000 in Texas.

Most recently, Japan Central Railway, the company that developed the system for the Japanese Shinkansen bullet train, announced plans to collaborate with Texas Central Partners to develop the Texas bullet train from Houston to Dallas.

In addition to Mitsubishi, Mitsui and Sumitomo, notable Japanese majority-owned companies in Houston include Daikin, a multinational air conditioning manufacturing company; Kuraray, a manufacturer of adhesives and chemical products such as water-soluble films that encase single-dose detergent packs; and Satake, a manufacturer of food processing equipment for the rice industry.

Tickets are \$45 for members of the Japan-America Society of Houston and \$55 for non-members.

For tickets and information, go to www.jas-hou.org or call 713-963-0121.

The Japan Update Conference is supported by the National Association of Japan-America Societies with a grant from The Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

About The Japan-America Society of Houston

The Japan America Society of Houston (JASH) is the leading organization that connects Houston's diverse community, local businesses, and individuals to advance the mutual interest of American and Japanese peoples. Its programs in language and education, arts and culture, and business initiatives and networking provide opportunities for collaboration and important people-to-people exchange. www.jas-hou.org

About The National Association of Japan-America Societies

The National Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization that offers through its member Japan and Japan-America Societies education, cultural and business programs about Japan and the U.S.-Japan relations to the general public. NAJAS is the only national non-profit network in the United States dedicated to public education about Japan. NAJAS consists of approximately 40 independent Japan-related organizations located in 32 cities around the country. Its membership cuts across usual group boundaries (business, political, academic, American, Japanese, etc.) and affords a variety of perspectives on U.S.-Japan relations. www.us-japan.org

About The Sasakawa Peace Foundation

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) was established in 1986, in Japan, with a mission to contribute to the welfare of humankind and the sound development of the international community, and, thus, to world peace, by conducting activities fostering international understanding, exchange, and cooperation. The Foundation's efforts in support of this mission include surveys and research, development of human resources, invitation and dispatch of personnel, organizing and supporting international conferences and other forums. www.spf.org