

March 25, 2019

Dear California-Japan Sister Cities Friends:

My name is Tomochika Uyama, Consul General of Japan in San Francisco. On behalf of the Japanese Government, I am delighted to offer our support of the activities of the California-Japan Sister Cities Network.

As you well know, sister cities form the basis for strong grassroots relations that encourage international cultural exchanges and help build personal bonds. They demonstrate how significant people-to-people exchanges are in keeping our country-to-country relations vibrant. Student exchange programs in particular significantly impact the lives of youth by fostering globally educated and engaged citizens, thereby securing a better future for the next generation. As a student, I myself visited California for a homestay program. While it was not through a sister city program, it was nonetheless an amazingly influential experience that deeply affected the course of my life and my decision to become a diplomat.

People like yourselves are proven, dedicated individuals who hold a deep passion for maintaining sister city relationships with Japan. You have all put in innumerable hours establishing, sustaining, and improving these valuable relationships from this side of the Pacific Ocean. You are the people who make everything happen. Indeed, nothing would happen without your efforts.

Since 1957, over 100 sister and friendship city relationships have been established between cities in the State of California and Japan. This number is about a quarter of the grand total for all US-Japan sister city relationships. It is therefore a natural next step to harness that wealth of common interest and experience for the sharing of best practices and collective growth. I firmly believe that this network will be an invaluable source of information, resources, and support for all California-Japan sister city programs, and even for cities who wish to create a new relationship with a city in Japan. Mutual cooperation between your cities and organizations within this network will only serve to strengthen your own relationship, and I recommend that you take full advantage of its potential.

With each activity you undertake, your sister city relationships grow even stronger, and the lives of more of your fellow citizens are changed for the better. As we develop and maintain ties between communities in our two countries, we are offering models not only for our local areas, but on a larger level for the United States and Japan, to work together and prosper together. The Japanese Consulate is proud to be involved in promoting these sister city relationships and we hope to continue to play a supportive role in the future.

Sincerely,



Tomochika Uyama

Consul General of Japan in San Francisco

