

# California-Japan Sister Cities Network

## Annual Letter 2022

Dear Friend,

December 31, 2022

Despite the lingering challenges due to the pandemic, the year 2022 was a very busy and successful year for the California-Japan Sister Cities Network (CJSCN). We are pleased to present our 4th Annual Letter to you, so that the CJSCN Board, sponsors, partners, and network organizations can celebrate our shared achievements together.

With the gradual lifting of the pandemic-related restrictions, both in our local communities and between Japan and the US, many sister city organizations brought back in-person events. Kudos to the brave leaders of some sister city programs who successfully sent their delegations to Japan in 2022! CJSCN was also able to host three in-person networking receptions this year!

We are extremely grateful for the continuing support from the Consulate of Japan in San Francisco and the Consulate of Japan in Los Angeles and all our sponsors. Together, we are helping make the California-Japan sister city community stronger.

The sister city programs in the network never stopped working even during the most restrictive periods of the pandemic. We continued to stay connected with each other, and even with our colleagues in Japan, through our virtual workshops and regional meetups. We learned to be resilient, creative, and even more committed to the mission of citizen diplomacy. We look forward to more collaboration and networking opportunities in the new year.

With appreciation,  
CJSCN Board



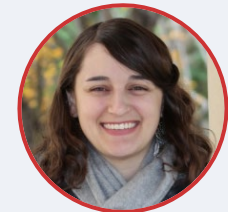
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## Looking Back at 2022

In 2022, CJSCN held four successful events. All of these events were co-hosted by the Consulates General of Japan in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

### May 2022 Event

On May 13, 2022, a spring networking reception was held at the residence of the Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles. Titled “Reignite the Sister City Community!”, the event was attended by approximately 40 people, representing 14 sister city programs in Southern California. It was the first in-person event in Southern California. The attendees were divided into four breakout groups based on their city’s geographic region. They were prompted to share information about



their program and discuss how they can collaborate regionally in the future. While enjoying the excellent food prepared by the Consul General’s chef, the attendees all appreciated the opportunity to see old friends and meet new people.

### June 2022 Event

On June 24, 2022, CJSCN’s annual online spring workshop was held via Zoom, once again themed “Reignite the Sister City Community!” It was attended by over 100 people, representing 27 cities from California and 11 cities from Japan. The featured presentation was given by CJSCN Board Member Frank McAuley about fundraising, and covered common challenges for all the sister city organizations. The participants enjoyed three breakout sessions, including a self-select style session with breakout rooms with 4 topics they could choose from: youth engagement, travel updates, fundraising, and networking for Japanese speakers. Engaging conversations continued until the very end.

### November 2022 Event

In an effort to expand sister city activities to youth and businesses, CJSCN held an in-person workshop titled “Connecting Sister City Youth with Your Community” at Balboa Park in San Diego on November 19. The event was held in partnership with the San Diego-Yokohama Sister City Society, who held an event celebrating the 65th anniversary of their sister city relationship with Yokohama on the same day. It was attended by 80 people, including many local Japanese businesses, students, young professionals, and sister city program leaders.



Ryan Tomita, Board Member of the San Carlos Sister City Association and President of the San Diego State University Japanese Student Association, delivered remarks about his internship experience in Rikuzentakata and how sister city programs and businesses can support young leaders. During the breakout session, the attendees shared their ideas and visions of the future sister city-business collaborations.

## December 2022 Event

CJSCN concluded this year's program with a networking reception on December 9 at the residence of Consul General Noguchi of San Francisco. Themed "Engaging the Next Generation of Sister City Leadership", the event was attended by 70 people, representing 26 cities in Northern and Central California. We were thrilled to see that approximately 25% of the attendees were "Next Gen" leaders.



Once again, Ryan Tomita, Board Member of the San Carlos Sister City Association and President of the San Diego State University Japanese Student Association, shared his remarks via pre-recorded video. We also welcomed another next gen leader, Grace Aimi, an Okinawa-based singer-songwriter and Honorary Board Member of the San Diego-Yokohama Sister City Society. The talents, enthusiasm, and unique visions of these young leaders inspired us all.

## Announcement of Southern California CJSCN Regions

In 2022, in parallel with the first in-person CJSCN even in Southern California, CJSCN announced the division of Southern California sister city regions. CJSCN divides its subscribers into different regions, which are used to organize local networking events and manage subscribers more efficiently. Liaisons for each region also act as a CJSCN point of contact for disseminating information as needed. Previously, CJSCN had only determined regions for Northern and Central California, but thanks to our partnership with the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles in 2021, we are now able to fully serve sister city organizations in Southern California as well. You can see a list of CJSCN's regional divisions on our website here: <https://www.caljapansistercities.org/cjscn-regions>

## Looking Forward to 2023

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### Plans for CJSCN Events in 2023

CJSCN hopes to continue hosting both in-person and virtual events for the network in 2023. We also encourage sister city organizations to continue meeting regionally to support each other and explore opportunities for collaboration. As always, the CJSCN Board is looking for activities that we can host or support to help strengthen sister city activities in our network. If you have suggestions for presentation or discussion topics for CJSCN's annual events, or ideas for other activities, please feel free to contact us at <mailto:info@caljapansistercities.org>.

## Thank You to Our Sponsors & Partners

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We would like to recognize our sponsors and partners, without whose help CJSCN would not be possible.

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