

California-Japan Sister Cities Network

Annual Letter 2023

Dear Friends,

December 31, 2023

We are pleased to present our 5th Annual Letter to you, so that the California-Japan Sister Cities Network (CJSCN) Board, sponsors, partners, and network organizations can celebrate our shared achievements together.

With the theme of “Navigating the Renewed Opportunities for Sister Cities,” the year 2023 was a very busy and successful year for CJSCN. We were able to host one in-person networking reception, in addition to our annual online workshop 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 all 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 are confident that resilience, creativity, and the strong network we built together during the pandemic will continue to help our citizen diplomacy work.

We look forward to more collaboration and networking opportunities in the new year.

With appreciation,
CJSCN Board

Looking Back at 2023

In 2023, CJSCN held two successful events. Both of these events were co-hosted by the Consulates General of Japan in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

May 2023 Event

On May 19, 2023, CJSCN held its annual online Spring Workshop via Zoom, which was hosted and moderated by the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco. The workshop’s theme was “Navigating Renewed Opportunities for Sister Cities.” It was attended by approximately 150 people including sister city organization



Meg Mizutani

President



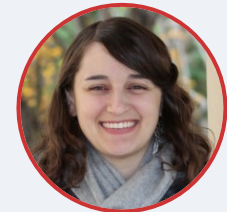
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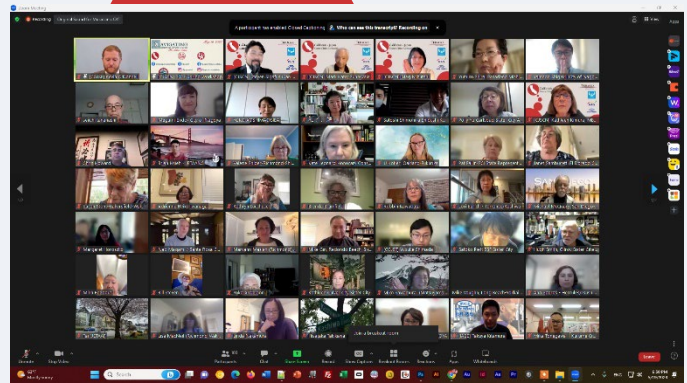
Board Member



Steven Sigafus

Board Member

community stakeholders, and JET alumni. Overall, 51 California cities and 25 Japanese cities were represented. The main presentation of the day featured Ms. Donna Dunlap, President of Torrance Sister City Association and Mr. Roy Cencirulo, President of Redland Sister Cities Association. They had both recently completed hosting and travel respectively and shared their insight about how they made their post pandemic exchanges successful. Their presentation file, as well as other resources and a full write-up of this event can be found on the [CJSCN website](#).



October 2023 Event

On October 6, CJSCN and the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles hosted a Fall Workshop at the Official Residence of the Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles. The event theme was “Navigating Renewed Opportunities for Sister Cities”. Approximately 50 people attended, including sister city leaders, youth leaders, and business leaders in Southern California. It was the second in-person



reception in Los Angeles for CJSCN’s network, after the 2022 spring event. We welcomed remarks from two guest speakers: Ambassador Nina Hachigian (Special Representative for City and State Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State) and Owen Miller (San Diego-Yokohama Sister City Society youth leader). They were followed by a presentation by Ms. Alissa Miky, CEO of Cashi Cake Inc. A recording of Owen Miller’s speech and a full write-up of the event can be found on the [CJSCN website](#).

Looking Forward to 2024

Plans for CJSCN Events in 2024

CJSCN hopes to continue hosting both in-person and virtual events for the network in 2024. In fact, our next event will be held right away in January 2024! 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 info@caljapansistercities.org.

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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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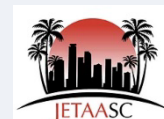
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