



2018 New Year's Greeting from Consul General Yoichiro Yamada

Happy New Year! Half a year has passed since I assumed the position as Consul General here in Seattle. I have had the great pleasure of meeting many individuals from all fields and participating in a variety of events: summer festivals, cultural events, ceremonies, and anniversary celebrations. It has dawned on me that the relationship between Washington State and Japan is not just simply characterized by their strong and vibrant relationship of today, but also their intricate and extensive history.

There are currently 35 sister cities between Washington State and Japan, and their activities are bright and lively. Many Japan-related events can be found in the greater Seattle area, thanks to the careful protection and guardianship of traditional cultural aspects by the Japanese Americans. In addition to the current worldwide appeal of Japanese culture, about 70 years ago, Japan and the United States were fighting a tragic full-scale war. In Japan it is not well known that in the United States, as many as 120,000 Japanese Americans were segregated from society and placed in internment camps during World War II. Today, Japanese citizens are warmly welcomed to Washington State thanks to the Japanese Americans during and after war who garnered the American people's trust and respect while overcoming suffering and discrimination. History has been weaving a complicated fabric that continues to stretch towards the present.

Seattle is now a global center for artificial intelligence development. There is a steady current of people and companies coming here from around the world, mainly in the field of computer engineering, and innovation continues to build on each other. We see many businesspersons and innovators from Japan visiting as well. Since this field has great potential in many different ways, as Consul General, I wish to help connect Japanese and Seattle-based companies and research institutes.

There are not only short-term business expatriates and exchange students, but also 9,000 permanent Japanese residents living in Washington State. Therefore, a variety of challenges wait to be solved. As the economy is growing, many of these challenges are generally that of strengthening existing positive relations towards the next milestone, but there are also deeply-rooted problems, such as those that arise from the marital complications between Japanese and American citizens; our office is currently in discussion with multiple stakeholders on the various ways to extend assistance.

It is the consulate's mission to be helpful in solving the many different kinds of challenges that arise and foster connections among people. I would like to give it my all in 2018. I look forward to working with you in the New Year.

January 2018

Yoichiro Yamada

Consul General of Japan

Japanese Government Scholarship Applications Now Available

Deadline: Tuesday, February 13, 2018

The Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle is now accepting applications for 2018 Japanese Government Scholarship (Japanese Studies Students) available to U.S. citizens residing in states of Washington, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Alaska.

[2018 Application Instructions](#)

[2018 Application Forms](#)

Videos on Japan's Foreign Policy Now Updated!

Check out the four **new** videos about Japan's foreign policy produced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

- [Japan's Efforts toward Connecting and Prospering the World for Free and Open Indo-Pacific](#)
- [Japan as a Place to Expand Opportunities for Chinese Highly-Skilled Professionals](#)
- [For a Sustainable Future...Japan's Science and Technology Becoming a Bridge across the World](#)
- [Promoting the Active Role of Women in the Fields of Science](#)



Consul General Yamada writes a monthly column about his experiences in the United States, providing interesting insight into the similarities and differences between Japanese and American cultures.

His most recent column is about his adventures in Montana during the 35th Anniversary of Montana-Kumamoto sister-state relations, which you can read more about [here](#).

Check out past issues: [English](#) | [Japanese](#)



2018 Emperor's Birthday Reception

On December 1, the Consulate-General of Japan held its annual Emperor's Birthday Reception at the Official Residence. Nearly 250 people attended, including local government officials, Japanese-American community leaders, and Japanese business representatives. During the program, King County Executive Dow Constantine delivered a greeting followed by a toast by Rear Admiral Gary Mayes, Commander of Navy Region Northwest, using sake brewed by Nihon Sakai in Nishinomiya, Hyogo Prefecture. Guests enjoyed a meal of various dishes prepared by Chef Ryuchi Masuko and pleasant conversation.

Imperial Decoration Conferment Ceremony for Former Washington State Senator Karen Fraser



On November 20, 2017, a conferment ceremony and reception was held at the Official Residence to congratulate Former Washington State Senator Karen Fraser for her receipt of The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette. Senator Fraser was awarded the Imperial Decoration for her outstanding contributions towards the promotion of Japanese culture and exchange between Japan and the United States.

[Read more](#)



35th Anniversary of Kumamoto-Montana Sister-State Relations and Professor Rabinovitch Awarded Foreign Minister's Commendation

From November 12 to 16, 2017, Governor Ikuo Kabashima of Kumamoto Prefecture visited

several cities in Montana where Kumamoto-Montana sister state exchange events were held. [Read more](#).

At that time, Dr. Judith Rabinovitch (Kumamoto-Tsukasa Professor Emerita of Japanese Language and Culture at the University of Montana) was presented the Foreign Minister's Commendation for 2017 by Consul General Yamada for her long-term contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and the United States. [Read more](#)

Read about Consul General Yamada's experiences and observations during the festivities in [No. 10 of Through the Eyes of the Consul General](#)

Academic Open Space Collaboration with University of Washington and Tohoku University

In honor of the Academic Open Space program held from November 16 to 17, a reception was held at the Consul General's Official Residence inviting members from the University of Washington and Tohoku University.

[Read more](#)



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