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2021: TIME TO TRANSFORM, ADAPT AND BE RESILIENT

New ACCJ President
Jenifer Rogers on the year ahead

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ACCJ President Jenifer Rogers

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BRIDGE TO SUCCESS



Christopher Bryan Jones
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Last month, I concluded my column by saying that I'm looking forward to 2021 and seeing how business in Japan evolves. Now that 2020 is behind us, it's time to turn hopes into action and cross the bridge from the pandemic to the new normal.

OPTIMISM

Of course, the pandemic is far from over, but with vaccinations beginning soon and our understanding of the virus, and how to manage risk, growing, there is a feeling of forward momentum in the air. We can see light at the end of the tunnel.

The early months of the pandemic were hard on me, and sometimes I became pessimistic—a trait I don't normally associate with myself. But the innovation, expertise, passion, and drive of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) and its members has allowed me to shake off negative thoughts and feel confident about the future of our business community.

That feeling only grew when I sat down with Jenifer Rogers at the ACCJ office on December 11 for the interview that starts on page 8. Her optimism about the year to come, and stories of how the chamber has had a positive impact on her and the community time and again, shines a bright light on the path ahead.

STABILITY

Something I think we all look for at times like these is stability; I know it is very important to me. Over my 25 years in publishing, I've worked on numerous magazines, usually for a few years each. But as I was preparing this issue of *The ACCJ Journal*, I realized that I am entering my sixth year as editor-in-chief, and Jenifer is the fifth president since I took the helm. Each has built on the successes of their predecessor, making my job of supporting the ACCJ as the voice of global business in Japan easier.

While many things have changed in my life during that time, working with these leaders—and so many professionals in and out of the chamber—to explore business and societal issues in Japan has been a rewarding through line. Such steadiness is something that all companies, large and small, must cling to as they navigate the uncertain waters of 2021.

NEW WORLD

Waiting for us in those waters is what we have been calling the new normal. It's a deceptively simple label for an idea that remains abstract. But, bit by bit, we are learning how to function in a world that is forcing us to rethink how we operate. There are incredible opportunities for those willing to adapt.

And I believe willingness is the key. We are all capable of adapting, but doing so isn't easy. Our workflows, business models, and ways of communicating are all being challenged, and sometimes it is uncomfortable. But I really feel that the destination to which we are headed is a place much better than where we were 12 months ago.

I hope that optimism is reflected in the pages of this journal in the months to come as we explore the next steps out of the pandemic, with a focus on the innovation and leadership—across all industries—that will make 2021 a year to remember for its successes. ■

A flagship publication of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ), *The ACCJ Journal* is a business magazine with a 58-year history.

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We extend our best wishes for a safe and prosperous 2021 as our business community strides into the new normal.

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WALK WITH KINGS

But never lose the common touch



Simon Farrell
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A very warm welcome to all readers of the final issue of *The ACCJ Journal* to be published by Custom Media. After much reflection, we have decided not to renew our contract to produce the magazine, so the entire operation moves in house from the next issue after more than a quarter century of outsourced production.

The ACCJ Journal has been published since March 1964, which puts our efforts into context, but we are proud of what we have achieved in just seven years. So, over to Custom Media CEO Robert Heldt: “A very special thank you to those ACCJ members who approached us in 2013 to rescue *The Journal*. We have since worked closely with them, other leaders, and teams to reposition and establish *The Journal* as The Authority for Global Business in Japan.

“With the rapid global acceleration towards digital transformation, our company, clients, vendors, partners, and other stakeholders are focusing more on integrated digital marketing—with a solid and measurable return on investment—so we have decided to apply

more of our products and services to these growing demands.”

LOOKING BACK

You may not have known that our experience with producing *The Journal* reaches back even further. I was editor-in-chief and Robert was an account executive—and later sales manager—from 2005 to 2007, when we first shared our mutual dream for establishing an innovative media company, with the proverbial scribbling on napkins during furtive lunches and after-work drinks.

Since Custom Media’s first issue in September 2013, we have been through three editors, including two women, and two executive directors, while new ACCJ presidents traditionally take office every one or two years, each with their own idea of what *The Journal* should offer readers and members.

Within months of our launch issue, we were honored to produce a special edition to mark the magazine’s 50th anniversary (March 2014). We later covered sensitive and contemporary issues such as international child abduction and diversity, with ACCJ Woman of the Year Fumiko Hayashi on the February 2015 cover. And we were also delighted to feature philanthropist Bill Gates on our December 2018 cover as he wrote on Japan’s urgent role in health investment. There are too many more personal favorites to mention here.

Highlights also include a few faux pas that offended some, such as serializing a book that mentioned too many times a post-war red-light district of Tokyo, and the August 2019 cover image and title of Donald Trump and Shinzo Abe at the G20 summit.

In contrast to Trump’s leadership style, it was then-Executive Director Sam Kidder who encouraged and guided us, oversaw our first year or so, and inspired us most, with his own brand of diplomatic professionalism. We called our January 2015 farewell tribute to him “Walking with Kings, But never losing the common touch,” which pretty much summed up Sam.

Indeed, I had barely heard from Sam recently, until fate directed me to his new book on LinkedIn just last month. I immediately decided to review *Of One Blood All Nations: John Bingham: Ohio Congressman’s Diplomatic Career in Meiji Japan (1873–1885)* in, fittingly, our last *Journal*. However, due to Covid-19 and the seasonal postal rush, that will have to wait for the next publisher.

From Robert and me to Sam’s successor Laura Younger and all our friends at the ACCJ and beyond, thanks for your support as partners in print—and digital.

And, of course, a very big thanks indeed to Chris Jones for his expert, patient and loyal work as editor-in-chief these past five years.

All the best to everyone with your health and happiness in 2021. We are sure to see you around soon. ■





INTERVIEW

2021: TIME TO TRANSFORM, ADAPT AND BE RESILIENT

New ACCJ President Jenifer Rogers
on the year ahead

By C Bryan Jones

[The ACCJ] gave me a window into a much broader business community when I was a fairly young professional.

With each new year comes change. That's what I wrote to begin my interview last January with Google Japan President Peter Fitzgerald, the incoming president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ). But just how much change 2020 would bring is something none of us could have anticipated. Fitzgerald deftly guided the chamber through a challenging year, and now passes the baton to Jenifer Rogers, general counsel Asia at IT services company Asurion.

Rogers has long ties to the ACCJ—her parents were on the board of governors in the 1980s—and has served on the board as a governor and vice president. That's in addition to contributing as vice-chair of the Alternative Investment and Digital Economy Committees, as well as chairing the Election Governance Task Force and co-chairing the Digital Society Pillar.

A lawyer with a 30-year legal career in financial and IT services, Rogers is one of few non-Japanese women in a non-executive director role on the boards of listed Japanese companies, serving Mitsui & Co., Ltd., Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd., and Nissan Motor Corporation.

The ACCJ Journal sat down with the Michigan native to learn more about the role the chamber has played in her life and how she sees the road ahead as we look at the business world beyond the pandemic.

What brought you to Japan?

My father was transferred here in 1980 to become president of Dow Chemical Japan, so I finished high school early and came over in January 1981. I ended up going to university here for two years. That gave me a foundation in the Japanese language and culture, and started a lifelong interest in Japan.

How did you become involved in the ACCJ?

I came back to Japan six years ago as a fourth-time returnee, and I hadn't lived in Japan for 14 years. One of the things I really wanted to do was to reconnect with the business community. I also wanted to get back into learning about the topical matters that are important to the Japan-US dialogue.

I joined originally as an individual, and then I persuaded my company, Asurion, to join as a corporate member four years ago. Now we're going to become a corporate sustaining member. So, I think I've seen a whole life cycle of membership.

How has the chamber helped your career?

When I first became a member—when I was here working for Merrill Lynch in the late 1990s—the ACCJ really helped me, as a lawyer, to get information from other people who were working in similar areas and in the finance community. It also gave me an opportunity to deliver presentations—in particular I covered the derivatives area—and that provided me with some professional visibility and helped me develop a public speaking style.

Also, importantly, it gave me a great network. One of the most powerful things about the chamber is that it hosts so many events and provides its members with so much information. This gave me a window into a much broader business community when I was a fairly young professional, and I really benefited from that.

Which of your ACCJ experiences stands out most?

Having been involved as a committee member since I returned to Japan in 2014, and on the board of governors since 2016, I have had a lot of great interactions. When I came back to Japan, I joined the Alternative Investment Committee as a vice-chair.



PHOTO: MIKI KAWAGUCHI/UFJF. 14



PHOTO: MIRI KAWAGUCHI/FE14

I went with Frank Packard, who's still the chair, to meet with Hiromichi Mizuno—chief investment officer, at the time, of the Government Pension Investment Fund—to talk about sustainability and diversity.

The ability of the ACCJ to arrange that meeting so seamlessly, and open a door for getting the insight of such an influential professional, really showed me the power of the chamber. And then getting to interview him live on stage made it a memorable moment—one of many—and sort of energized and inspired me. It opened my eyes to the access, influence, and potential you have as a member of the ACCJ.

What moved you to take that next step and run for president?

I have been very lucky to have met a lot of other professional women through the ACCJ. Very enthusiastic women—Royanne Doi and Amy Jackson come to mind—who have made me feel welcome. I felt very encouraged and decided that I would be open to trying for a larger role. So, it was really the kindness, support, and openness of not only these women but many other ACCJ members that encouraged me to get more involved in the leadership.

How might 2020 influence the chamber in 2021?

The way in which the ACCJ leadership—particularly President Peter Fitzgerald and Executive Director Laura Younger—responded with community outreach for best practices during the pandemic positioned the chamber as one of the go-to organizations for information sharing. Town halls that included staff from the US embassy gave people the access they were looking for. These events also provided a very easy forum for discussing and understanding how people were responding and what best practices they could apply to their own businesses.

The successful pivot to virtual outreach to members, and the openness of the ACCJ to partner with other chambers and groups as a cohost, not only cemented the involvement of active members, but opened tremendous avenues that we

can utilize this year. We can broaden the reach of the chamber and boost interaction in ways that I'm quite passionate about. And it has been great for our One ACCJ initiative, providing better access for our members in Chubu and Kansai.

I believe there are other organizations we can work with to cohost events and get different access—and even some overseas access—to speakers from other countries. This will bring a new and welcome dynamic to what the chamber can offer its members. Embracing the virtual environment is really going to put us in a good position to transition back to networking and hybrid events that combine in-person and online participation. I don't think we're ever going to give up on the virtual element, because of the additional reach it has given us.

How can we strengthen networking in the new normal?

The chamber has pivoted to virtual in an incredible way, but one of our main tenets is to provide members with networking opportunities to make business connections, even across industries. This is something I'm quite passionate about; we really need to go back to some level of in-person interaction through hybrid events. We can give members the choice to participate in person or virtually, if they feel safer that way or it's more convenient for them.

Everybody's learning. Some other organizations and not-for-profits that I am involved in have already held very successful hybrid events. Having a limited number of people in the room makes a difference for speakers. When I have been on virtual panels, just looking at a computer the whole time, it's really hard to feel engaged with your audience. So even if you can have just some people in the room, observing social distancing, you can still really connect. And I think for the virtual participants, it gives a better dynamic. You can see and feel the energy of the speaker in a different way.

And this goes beyond speaking events. Most of the organizations that host us have put in place very good Covid-19 protections that will allow us to do some mindful social events

in a safe way this year to provide that important personal interaction safely. We really need to find a way to make it work so that members get the benefit of that important value proposition. We started this a bit at the end of last year, and I do think we need to continue.

How can the ACCJ best support members in 2021?

There's still quite a bit of uncertainty about the pandemic and how it will pan out, but I like to think of 2021 as a year of transformation. Hopefully, we will have the Olympics to look forward to and that will bring some new dynamics and vibrancy to the Japanese economy.

But what I really look forward to is that we've had a lot of workstyle reform in Japan. The pandemic and the move to digitalization has really forced change overnight. We're seeing the business community—Japanese and US companies—embracing some ongoing virtual capabilities and continuing to provide a lot of flexibility. It's going to make for an exciting opportunity to see a lot of the initiatives, that foreign companies here have worked hard on, come to fruition. Things such as workstyle reforms that the Japanese government has wanted, embracing diversity, and providing flexibility and better quality of life for workers who have long commutes.

So, I'm actually quite excited about this year, even given some of the unknowns. I don't know if we've really settled on what the new normal is, but I do hope we will soon get to some semblance of what that might mean. I do think that, with all of us having lived with the pandemic now for a lot longer than we had anticipated, the infrastructure and the realization that there's no going back brings a very exciting element that represents a restart of sorts and offers new opportunities for the business community.

How can the ACCJ nurture Japan's digital transformation?

A lot of Japanese companies that I'm involved with in board positions have been surprised by how easy it was to transition to virtual and remote work, but they had very different levels of infrastructure and ability to do so. Once you open up the possibility to people and they can survive it, there is a chance for real change. It isn't easy for all types of businesses. For example, you still have companies in manufacturing that cannot fully shift to virtual work. But for pure service companies, it's a very different value proposition.

Having said that, foreign companies, such as the one I currently work for, did it rather seamlessly overnight. So, while perhaps a lot of Japanese companies were caught by surprise, there is now an understanding that there has to be a virtual capability—because we still don't know exactly when we're going to have an end to the pandemic. The realization that the need for digital is here to stay has begun to creep into conversations.

For a lot of Japanese companies that have been trying to transition to digital, it can be an expensive proposition, and there are mindset challenges among those who aren't as familiar

with digitalization, and prefer face-to-face interaction, that can create a lot of internal opposition. But I think many of the barriers that have appeared to be immovable have now begun to shift.

I do find, though, that while the things that virtual events and remote work have brought us are great, we all miss the direct social and human dynamic. So much of innovation stems from getting together in a group and brainstorming. To what extent we can do that dynamically when purely operating virtually is still a question mark. But with the Japanese government setting up a digital agency, and with Prime Minister [Yoshihide] Suga's commitment to reforming the paper-based society, the road is being paved to do a lot more things online that seemed quite impossible in the past. There are governmental and other organizations here that have been very passionate about moving Japan toward digitalization and, as a result of the pandemic, they're going to be able to push that policy forward. So, I'm quite optimistic that Japan is moving that way.

What the US business community and the ACCJ can do is support digital transformation 100 percent and keep the issue front and center. The chamber has always been a leader, and we came out in support of the US–Japan Digital Trade Agreement last year. We continue to be very engaged with the Japanese and US governments on behalf of the business community, to help them understand the needs from a digital perspective, and I think the two governments align in their prioritization.

With the presence we have, and with our tech company members being very active in the research we're doing on digitalization advocacy, I find we're uniquely positioned to really galvanize all our members across our five advocacy pillars:

- US–Japan economic partnership
- Digital society
- Health and retirement
- Tourism, sports, and hospitality
- Workforce productivity

What's fascinating to me now is there is a perspective that, in the future, we're not going to be talking about working for a financial company or a pharma or healthcare company; we're all going to be technology companies with a specialty in finance, healthcare, or whatever area. It's been treated almost as a joke, but it's true. I really do think that the speed of transformation brought on by the pandemic has been a game changer for businesses in Japan.

How can the chamber support healthcare through digital?

The activities and volunteer level of our Healthcare Committee members and healthcare companies is amazing. They are extremely active. Thanks to them we have had a voice, and will continue to have a voice.

With the largest aging population in the world, Japan is really at the forefront of the challenges and opportunities in

The chamber has pivoted to virtual in an incredible way, but one of our main tenets is to provide members with networking opportunities to make business connections, even across industries.

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the healthcare arena. Demographically, some of the issues facing healthcare providers are unique, and I think digitalization will play well into providing tailored solutions.

Pandemics such as Covid-19 will create the need for more implementation of technology for things such as remote care and even the use of robotics in surgery. Digital platforms can be used to provide outreach and care for Japan's rural communities, and also to address some of the questions around the cost of healthcare and how the system can be more efficient.

There are so many exciting opportunities, such as the huge progress made in every individual's ability to monitor their own biology using tech such as that of our recent ACCJ Healthcare x Digital Best Innovation Award and Moonshot Prize winner Bisu, who makes a smart urine analyzer that anyone can easily use at home.

Healthcare has to be a priority not just this year, as we emerge from the pandemic, but for the next the five years, 10 years, and beyond. We have a really strong active component in all areas of healthcare, and I have been very impressed with the upcoming white paper. I'm confident that the chamber will continue to be a voice for, and a driver of, change.

How can the ACCJ continue to support trade talks?

The chamber has been a very influential organization throughout its 72-year history. One reason is our dedication to advocacy and to trying to ensure the ability of foreign companies to compete effectively and grow in the Japanese market. Many chambers don't engage in advocacy—not on the level that we do—and having that power of voice that spans industries is hugely beneficial.

What I've seen as I've become more involved in the ACCJ, and especially at the vice president level, is just how close our ties are with the US Embassy and how, together, we can serve as a collective voice. We get a lot of active outreach from the embassy and other government organizations, asking what our members are concerned about. I don't see that changing at all, even in a virtual world. The recent bilateral trade talks continued virtually and were mostly unaffected by the pandemic.

I have found the engagement between the US government and the chamber to be quite open, and the same goes for the Japanese government. I feel that both really appreciate that they can come to one place and get a much broader perspective that helps them understand the priorities from an industry point of view. I personally believe that this is only going to become more critical, especially with new administrations in both countries.

Every time there's an administration change, we want to reengage—whether it's bilaterally or multilaterally—to find how we can work in the most effective way for our members to engage. We want to make sure their voices are heard and that we can really be at the start of the dialogue instead of coming in at the end, where it is harder to be an influencer.

Do you see progress on corporate governance in Japan?

This is a topic I'm quite passionate about. When I came to Japan for the second time, it was on a Fulbright scholarship to the University of Tokyo. My topic was a labor law project on the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and its impact on college-educated women. At the time, there were fewer opportunities for college-educated women, as they had less time in the workforce before marriage than those who did not go to college. Japan had signed the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979 and had enacted the Equal Opportunity Act in 1985 to meet the conditions under the Convention. There was a lot of hope that things were changing, that there would be more diversity.

What I find really encouraging since my return six years ago is that you're really starting to see things change. Even though Japan might be ranked much lower on the global indices than people would expect, it has about tripled the number of women on boards since the time I was studying and working on that project. So, it's incremental, in a way. But if you had asked me back then if I would someday serve on the board of a Japanese listed company as a foreign woman, I really would not have foreseen that. So, I am very excited about it.

I think the catalyst for change—especially around diversity—has been the demographic and economic challenges that Japan is facing, and what a lot of government agencies have worried about is stagnation. There is concern that Japan hasn't continued innovating and is behind in digitalization. I think this has been attributed, in part, to a lack of diversity in management. The reason that I am a choice for Japanese companies is that they're willing and are really trying to change the makeup of their boards to get different perspectives. They see diversity as a real plus for innovation. So I feel quite optimistic. I think it's an exciting time for Japanese companies to do more on that front.

Another role of the ACCJ is to model best business practices, and I feel very privileged to have been elected president and to be the third woman to lead the chamber. We now have more than 30 percent of our leadership positions filled by women, and our board this year—with 10 women and 13 men—is the

**We have a really strong active component in all areas of healthcare, and . . .
I'm confident that the chamber will continue to be a voice for, and a driver of, change.**



Navigate the new normal. We can help.

Custom Media wishes ACCJ Journal Readers and Partners a very happy and healthy New Year!



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most diverse it has ever been. It is also diverse in terms of the organizations represented, from Fortune 500 companies to small and medium-sized enterprises.

I continue to believe the saying that you have to “be the change you wish to see in the world.” So, I’m really hoping that with this diverse board—and with me having been endorsed by the membership—we’re showing that the ACCJ believes in the importance of diversity and that we live that message. I’m quite optimistic that we can continue to encourage that.

Are Japanese companies embracing diversity?

People often ask me how it is to serve on Japanese boards. Every company is different, but I don’t think I’m the first choice “off the shelf,” so to speak. I’m double diversity, right? I’m a foreigner and a female, and I’ve worked globally, so I have my own views on things. But I’m very encouraged by the fact that, when I am chosen for the board, people are expecting, and are open to, a different perspective.

We all know that in Japanese society there’s less diversity of nationalities, but I do believe that Japanese companies are really starting to realize that diversity can cut across other areas. It can be younger people or people from different walks of life. It doesn’t have to be only foreigners.

The fact that Japanese companies are actively searching now for more diversity—especially focusing on the representation of women in management positions—is a very encouraging and healthy sign. As the domestic market shrinks and other demographic pressures come into play, Japanese companies—especially the multinationals—are quite savvy and are working to ensure their global competitiveness. Maybe Covid-19 has played a role, but I do think, if we look ahead to the next few years, a confluence of factors will really encourage Japanese companies to embrace diversity.

It’s not easy to change. Japan is a consensus culture. People love the concept of diversity but, in reality, managing diversity can be challenging and can lead to a lot of discomfort. I have found myself in many global situations, when I was in India and other places, having had meetings with diverse voices that forced me to really step back and challenge my assumptions. While I think diversity may not be easy, it is incredibly important and beneficial. I hope that, within the chamber, people will learn that that’s my style of leadership. I like to engage in open, honest dialogue and to create a place where people feel

they can share different views, because I believe that’s how you get to the best outcome.

What do you see as the chamber’s key initiatives this year?

Transformation, resilience, and adaptability are key words for this year. I don’t see a need to dramatically change how we’re doing things, but we need to continue to be flexible. With 2021 being a year of transition from the pandemic to a new normal, getting back to basics with hybrid networking will be a focus. We need to make sure that, amid this new dynamic, we’re still providing the value that our members look for.

I really do hope we have the Olympics, because it could be a very good chance for a lot of our businesses to have more opportunity to bring tourism back to Japan and to promote many areas that our members are interested in.

We must also continue to push ahead on the key areas of advocacy that will help Japan transform between now and 2030. These especially cut across digitalization, healthcare, demographics, and sustainability.

On that last point, I think one of the game changers of 2020 is that the pandemic has galvanized concerns over climate change, so that the issue can now be a greater part of the dialogue about any company’s value proposition and planning. Every industry is now being affected by changing sustainability targets.

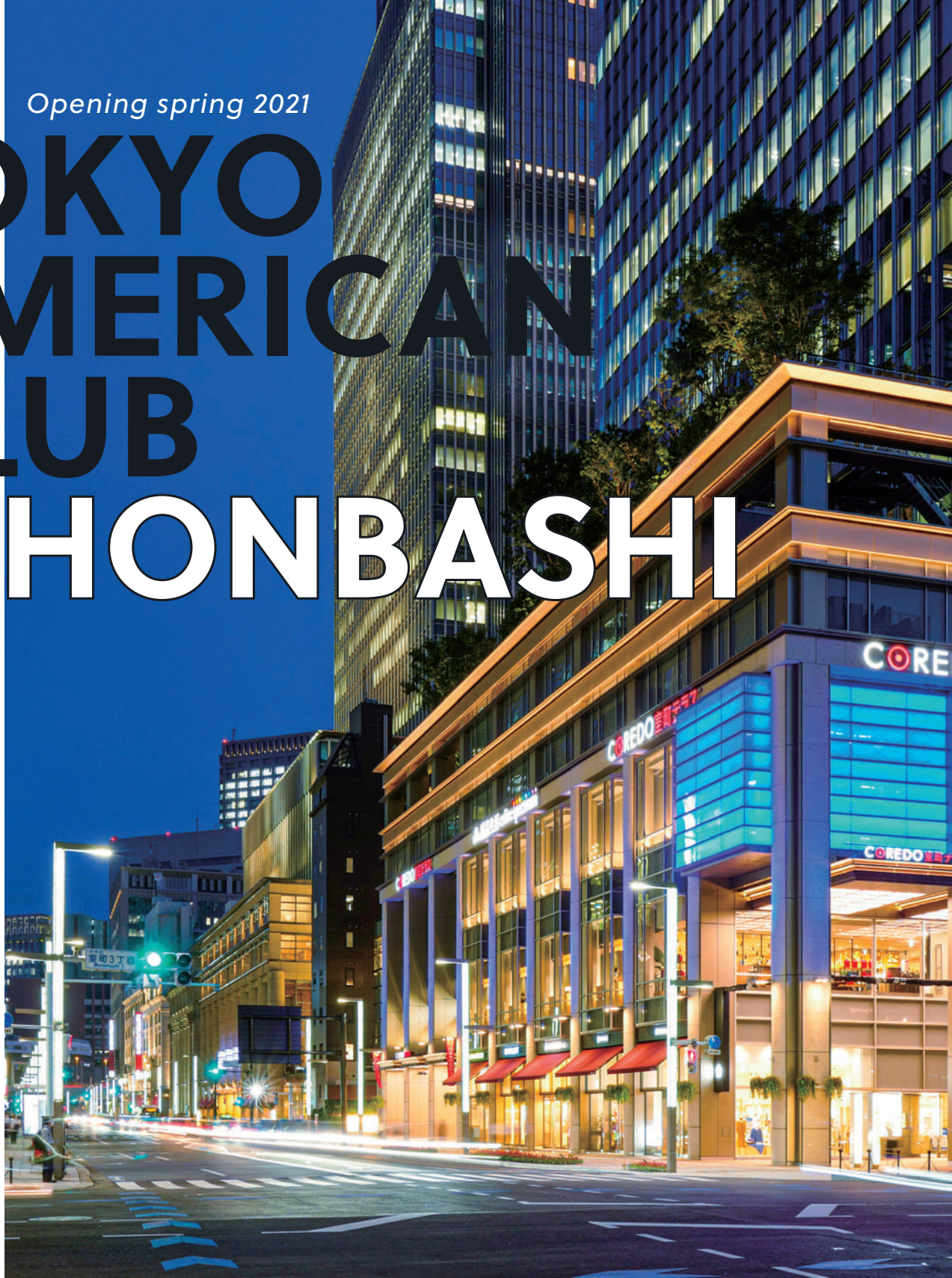
US companies, in particular, are used to a variety of stakeholders and shareholder activism, and many of our members have very direct and specific knowledge of how to do that outreach and to be responsive. The pressure to address climate change is only going to increase, and this is an area in which the ACCJ has a unique voice and can advocate.

What else would you like to say to members?

I would just like to thank everybody for their continued enthusiasm. We have such an amazing group of members who are willing to volunteer. They’re really unselfish with their time and they provide a lot of community support. I thank everyone for that engagement and their continued giving of their time and support. I feel very humbled by the confidence members have in me to lead the chamber this year, and I hope everyone will reach out to me with their views on priorities and let me know if the chamber is providing the advocacy they want to see. We’re continuing to adapt to our members’ needs and I want to ensure that the value proposition remains strong. ■

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Regional Energy

ACCJ leaders share plans to build on two decades of success

By C Bryan Jones

The Chubu chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) began celebrating its 20th anniversary last year, and outgoing Vice President Ray Proper and Governor Michel Weenick shared the history of the chapter—which started life as the American Business Community of Nagoya (ABCN)—in our May and September issues.

MEMORY LANE

Joining them in recounting the decades were members and leaders past and present including Steve Burson, Britt Creamer, Harry Hill, Dennis G. Lischak and Chris Zarodkiewicz.

Also contributing to the September story was Oak Lawn Marketing, Inc. Executive Chairman and President Robert W. Roche, who was elected in December to serve as the chapter's vice president for 2021–22. It will be his second time on the board; he was the chapter's first governor, serving consecutive terms in 2000–04.

For Roche, a founding member of the ABCN who has started and managed more than 50 businesses in Japan, China, and the United States, expanding business and networking opportunities for members in the Chubu region is a top priority.

“Our diverse membership of large and small businesses and entrepreneurs can benefit tremendously from increased collaboration and the formation of stronger business alliances,” he said, citing networking and mentorship as the greatest benefits of ACCJ membership.

“As a foreigner working and living in Nagoya in the early days of my career, I felt a bit isolated. If it weren't for the advice and mentoring I received, I don't think I would be where I am today.”

NEW CHANCES

Roche said he sees his return to the board as a chance to continue this tradition by creating additional opportunities to build stronger synergies and alliances among chamber members.

“At 3,500 members strong, the ACCJ has a unique opportunity to share its vast knowledge base, create synergies, and form alliances that result in increased business opportunities and success for all,” he said. “While many things have changed since my initial involvement with the ACCJ, one thing that hasn't

changed is the entrepreneurial spirit and the civic pride of the Chubu members.”

Jeffrey Jackson, founder of Jackson Sogo Gyoseishoshi Law Office and ACCJ-Chubu treasurer for 2021–22, feels very optimistic about the future. “Despite the impact of Covid-19, I see renewed energy in the Chubu chapter—and the ACCJ as a whole—and look forward to working with the board and other members to grow the ACCJ's local presence, community impact and membership,” he said.

The chapter's activities flourished in 2020 despite the pandemic, and Jackson said he is ready to build on the momentum by “working closely with the board and committees to identify ways to effectively promote the events and activities desired by our members, and further the mission of our chapter while also honoring our financial commitments and obligations.”

For Mark Hosang, who will serve as ACCJ-Chubu governor for 2021–22, engaging young talent is important. The task is ideal for him, having previously served as vice-chair of the Young Professionals Committee.

“The Chubu chapter has a strong membership base, but needs to nurture future generations of leaders by encouraging younger members to move into leadership positions,” explained Hosang, who is senior manager of enterprise services and security in Randstad Japan's IT division. “We need to identify and mentor future leaders, ensuring they can confidently step into leadership roles in the chapter. Then we can expand our focus on recruiting younger members with events that are attractive to them to expand the pool of potential future leaders.”

His plan is to enact a mentorship program, reach out to graduate students who are looking to expand their network, and engage with the local Japanese community through more Japanese-language events. “These three efforts will expand our member base and business reach while increasing membership value to our existing members,” he explained.

The role the ACCJ-Chubu has played over the past two decades to nurture and grow the region's business community has been indispensable, and with Roche, Jackson, and Hosang providing leadership this year, the future looks brighter than ever. ■

Robert W. Roche
ACCJ-Chubu vice president



Mark Hosang
ACCJ-Chubu governor



Jeffrey Jackson
ACCJ-Chubu treasurer



I see renewed energy in the Chubu chapter . . . and look forward to working with the board and other members to grow the ACCJ's local presence, community impact, and membership.



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Dale Carnegie

2020 ACCJ Leaders and Volunteers of the Year

By C Bryan Jones

Each year, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) honors members who have shown extraordinary dedication. The coronavirus pandemic made the usual celebratory gathering at Tokyo American Club impossible, so ACCJ President Peter Fitzgerald presented certificates at the virtual Leadership Forum on December 11. He thanked each honoree for their commitment to supporting the goals of the chamber, especially amid the challenges brought forth by Covid-19.

LEADER OF THE YEAR (TOKYO)

Catherine O'Connell



O'Connell was recognized for her work heading the merger of the Legal Services and Intellectual Property Committees. With grace and collegiality, she helped ensure a smooth and positive transition and unity in purpose, and now serves as

co-chair of the Legal Services & IP Committee, which has become one of the chamber's most active groups.

Her vision and dedication also enabled the ACCJ to provide critical information to members that has helped them navigate the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, and she has led programs which attracted widespread participation across the chamber. O'Connell has been instrumental in the ACCJ's advocacy efforts aimed at easing the restrictions the Japanese government has placed on non-Japanese residents and business owners attempting to reenter the country.

LEADER OF THE YEAR (TOKYO)

David Richards



As co-chair of the Banking, Finance and Capital Markets Committee, Richards has revitalized efforts to bring members real-time insights into financial services regulations and market developments.

He also chaired the Nominations Committee and curated the candidate slate for the 2020 ACCJ election with meticulous care, presenting excellent individuals to lead the chamber.

Richards also made crucial contributions to the Financial Services Forum, which serves to ensure that the ACCJ's position on financial services advocacy issues is approved by the board and addressed in a consistent manner. His hard work gave greater voice to the international investment community and helped efforts to position Japan as a global financial center.

LEADER OF THE YEAR (TOKYO)

Scott Warren



Warren championed the merger of the Legal Services and Intellectual Property Committees, synergizing efforts to provide essential networking and information opportunities to the membership and international legal community.

As co-chair, his enthusiasm and initiative facilitated the committee's timely and impactful events that addressed legal challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.

He also helped lead the ACCJ's important advocacy efforts on the easing of reentry restrictions, and his proactive engagement with members has encouraged many to take on leadership roles.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR (TOKYO)

Nuala Connolly



As a member of the Women in Business Committee, Connolly brought enthusiastic engagement and contributions to furthering opportunities for women in the workplace. She dedicated significant resources to revamp the Women in Business Reading

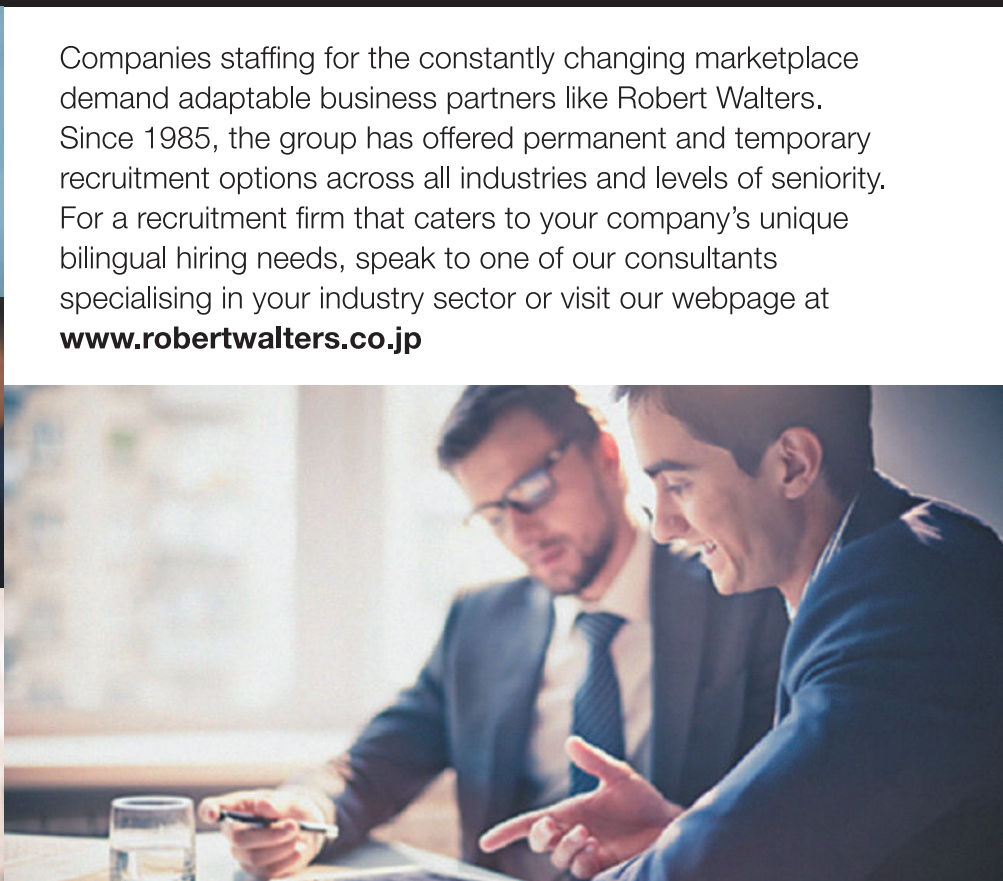
List, equipping leaders with additional tools to promote effective workplace reform and gender equality.

Her energy and collaborative spirit greatly added to the Women in Business Committee's efforts to realize its goals and inspire inclusive business practices.



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LEADER OF THE YEAR (KANSAI)

Steve Iwamura



As chair of the ACCJ-Kansai External Affairs Committee, Iwamura successfully planned and executed one of the chapter's flagship events: the annual discussion with the Union of Kansai Governments.

He overcame multiple administrative, logistical, and stakeholder challenges—compounded by the pandemic—to deliver a virtual event complete with simultaneous interpretation services.

Iwamura also helped coordinate and design the agenda for the event, highlighting the bilateral opportunities engendered by digital transformation and the role the ACCJ plays to accelerate holistic change. This successful panel discussion would not have been possible without his dedicated efforts and strong leadership.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR (KANSAI)

Asana Otani



The forced shift to virtual sessions brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic made organizing flagship events challenging in 2020. Such was the case for the ACCJ-Kansai Diversity & Inclusion Summit.

Otani helped transform what would normally have been a daylong in-person event into a series of virtual sessions that opened the content from expert speakers and leaders to a broader audience.

She brilliantly organized the breakout session and coordinated numerous administrative, logistical, and technical elements, allowing the session to dovetail with the overall series. Her diligent preparation paved the way for a smooth and enjoyable virtual experience, contributing to the summit's outstanding success.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR (KANSAI)

Takehiro Aoki



Aoki was recognized for his leadership of the ACCJ-Kansai Business Programs Committee's AI Technology Series, which brought industry leaders to virtual sessions presented in Japanese. He conceived and implemented the series to promote digital literacy and encourage young professionals to expand their skills in pivotal areas, furthering the chamber's goal to unlock Japan's digital potential. The series expanded the ACCJ's network and drew more than 600 attendees—a testament to Aoki's organizational prowess and ability to engage members.

He also contributed to *The ACCJ Journal* on multiple occasions, writing Japanese-language recaps of the AI Technology Series sessions to expand the visibility of the initiative and engage the Japanese community. ■

LEADER OF THE YEAR (CHUBU)

Mark Hosang



When the Chubu chapter merged three committees—Business Programs, Independent Business, and Women in Business—into one, Hosang provided exceptional leadership. As co-chair of the resulting ACCJ-Chubu Programs

Committee, he has enabled deeper member engagement, improved retention, and increased collaboration across the chamber as a whole.

Hosang also spearheads the Young Professionals Forum Mentorship Series, which creates critical development opportunities for the next generation of leaders.

He was integral to the successful execution of the 2020 Chubu Walkathon, using his IT expertise to ensure that the annual event continued in a virtual format, allowing the ACCJ to maintain its tradition of supporting the local community in these extraordinary times.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR (CHUBU)

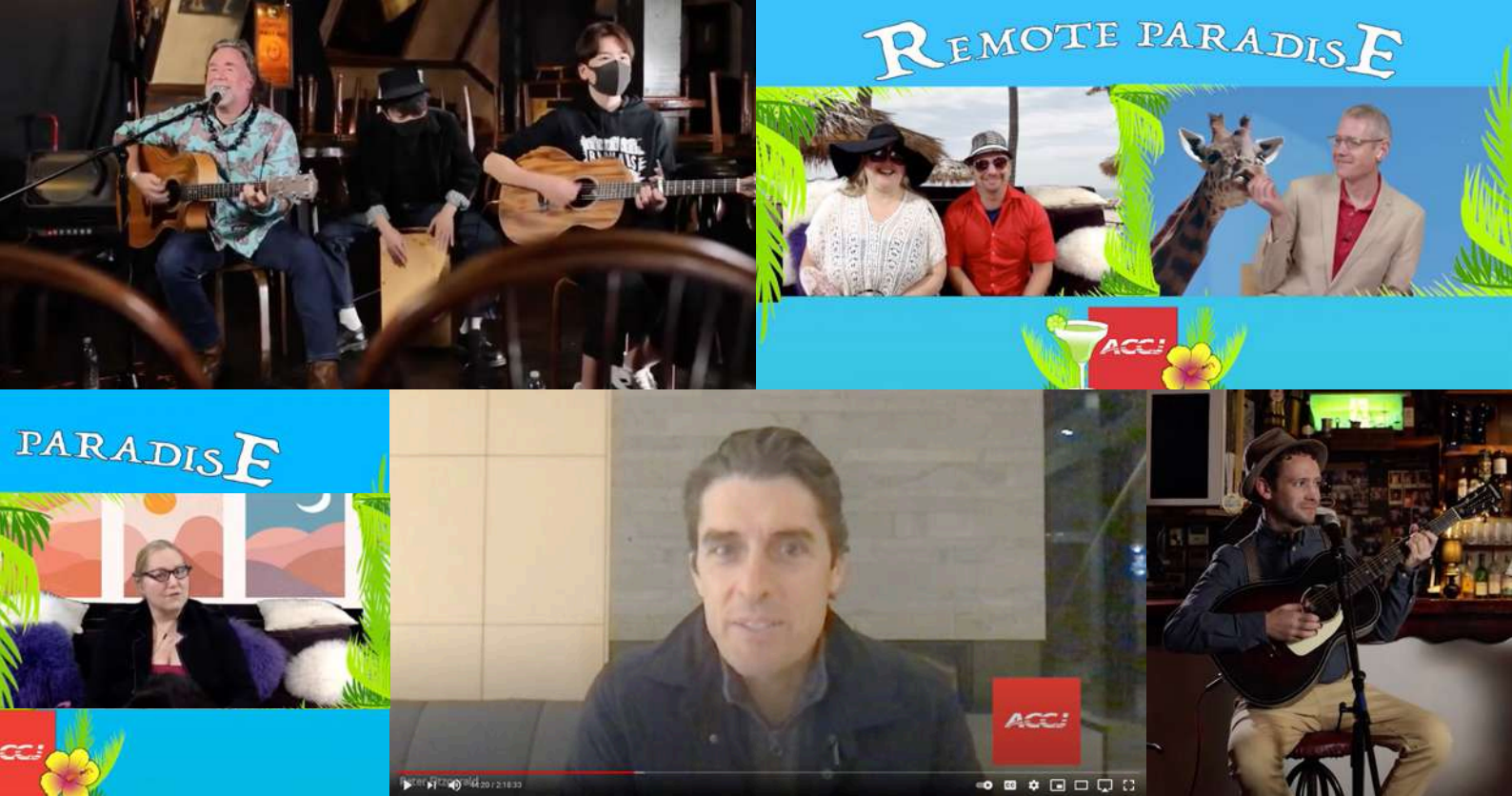
Bruce McCaughan



A longtime leader of the ACCJ's Chubu chapter, McCaughan was instrumental in the execution of the Champagne Ball and Chubu Walkathon, two of the ACCJ-Chubu's premier annual events. His digital marketing skills and positive demeanor ensured

that the 2020 Walkathon remained a fun and enjoyable experience in a virtual format.

McCaughan's efforts helped secure funds for local charities, upholding the ACCJ's strong tradition of community service under difficult circumstances. The 2020 Walkathon raised ¥6 million, which was distributed to 20 charitable organizations working in the Chubu region.



ACCJ EVENT

2020 ACCJ Virtual Charity Ball

Successful online gala raises funds for community

By the ACCJ Charity Ball Committee

Amid the challenges of 2020, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) Virtual Charity Ball, entitled Welcome to Remote Paradise, brought together chamber members past and present, as well as their guests, in the spirit of giving on December 5.

The need to social distance made this year’s edition of the ACCJ’s annual gala and flagship corporate social responsibility event more challenging to plan and execute. But not even a pandemic can deter the chamber’s dedication to the community and drive to support those who need a helping hand.

COMMUNITY

While our goal was to raise funds for charity, we also focused on supporting great entertainers who have had few chances to perform in recent months. Joining us for the evening were:

- Mississippi blues man Steve Gardner
- Singer, sax player, and bandleader Marcus Pittman
- Jazz pianist and composer Kevin McHugh
- Guitarist Chris Grundy
- Latin musician Alexander LP
- Singer-songwriter and acoustic musician Felix Sonnyboy
- The ACCJ’s own Andrew Silberman

They most certainly did not disappoint. All were thrilled to be a part of the Charity Ball and were extremely grateful to the chamber for the much-needed opportunity.

We also promoted local restaurants and delivery services who have likewise suffered from the impact of coronavirus. In particular are Soul Food House in Azabu-juban, which has been part of the Charity Ball since 2015, and Bistro Vino, the Roppongi eatery that has been one of our yearly wine vendors at the Charity Ball Wine Taste-off.

We may have been unable to enjoy their delicious creations in a ballroom, as in years past, but we hope those who ordered from them on the night enjoyed a taste of what makes Tokyo the world’s greatest foodie city. They expressed how extremely appreciative they are of your support, and we sincerely hope you will continue to patronize these establishments.

GIVING THANKS

Early in the evening, ACCJ President Peter Fitzgerald welcomed guests and noted the unusual circumstances.

“I know we all look forward to this event every year. It’s a great opportunity to socialize, enjoy each other’s company, and celebrate as we head into the new year,” he said.

“This, as we all know, is a very different year. A lot has changed. But what hasn’t changed is the need to support those in our community who are less fortunate. The ACCJ has a long tradition of supporting charitable work in Japan, and the Charity Ball is the engine that drives our involvement. By participating and giving generously, you’re making a real difference in the lives of countless people. I’d like to thank the Charity Ball Committee for their tireless work in a very challenging environment. You



Vickie Skorj



put together an amazing program. I'd also like to thank all our sponsors for your generosity and faith in the idea that the show must go on, because the need is greater than ever. Enjoy the evening and have fun while doing good. Take care everybody."

Joseph Young, charge d'affaires at the Embassy of the United States, Tokyo, spoke next, thanking the ACCJ for inviting him to present the evening's toast.

"Each year, the ACCJ Charity Ball is a lovely event for such a noble cause, and I only regret that we could not gather in person this year," he said. "There's no denying that 2020 has presented more than its fair share of challenges, but it has not been without successes. If you can remember back to the start of this year—though it may feel very distant now—the Phase 1 US-Japan Trade Agreement and Digital Trade Agreement both entered into force in January. With the economic hardship imposed by the global pandemic, it is certainly comforting to have in place these agreements to bolster our bilateral economic ties. I would like to thank the ACCJ members for helping to achieve agreements through your important support and advocacy during the negotiations."

He also thanked chamber members for the great lengths to which they have gone to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and their collaboration with the embassy.

"On behalf of my team at the embassy, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the ACCJ and its members for your advocacy efforts and steadfast support of our alliance. Join me

in raising a glass to your computer screens and toasting to our mutual health, happiness, and success in the future."

REAL RESULTS

In this remote world, the Charity Ball committee, together with the ACCJ Staff and members of the community, worked together to give back. In addition to a raffle, a virtual silent auction—with some 46 items up for grabs—took place throughout the evening, and participants could easily enter using the onscreen QR code. Thanks to our very supportive sponsors and all those who attended the event and participated in the raffle and auction, the ACCJ raised ¥7.5 million, making a big difference in our ability to help those in need.

This year, the focus was on those that have been there for the community during the pandemic: TELL, Second Harvest, the Sanyukai homeless shelter, and the chamber's long-established Mike Makino Fund for the Homeless, which supports the Franciscan Chapel Center and Tokyo Union Church rice programs. All extremely worthy causes.

We cannot thank our sponsors and the ACCJ community enough for making the evening a great success. Along with each and every person involved, we are grateful to everyone. Once again, thank you one and all!" ■

Watch a replay: www.accj.or.jp/charityball

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Space Commercialization and Cooperation among the United States, Australia, and Japan

By Alec Jordan



SpaceX's entry in NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services program

IMAGE: SPACEX'S

On December 6, a landing capsule from the space probe *Hayabusa2* parachuted down onto the red sand of Woomera, South Australia. In the capsule was precious cargo—samples of dust from the asteroid Ryugu, captured when the object was more than nine million kilometers (six million miles) from Earth. This ended the probe's original mission, which began in December 2014 when it was launched by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).

The mission also marks a nexus of collaboration among Japan, Australia, and the United States. The Australian government worked closely with JAXA to identify where the capsule would land and helped recover it. And the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has an agreement with JAXA by which the US agency will receive a portion of the dust samples.

This spirit of shared purpose took center stage at a virtual event entitled Space Commercialization and Cooperation among the US, Australia, and Japan, hosted on December 14 by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's Alternative Investment Committee. Speaking at the webinar were Naoko Sugita, advisor to the director of JAXA's International Relations and Research Department; Sally Townsend, commissioner at the Department for Trade and Investment with the Government of South Australia; and Garvey McIntosh, NASA attaché at the Embassy of the United States, Tokyo. Each speaker gave cogent and insightful overviews of how their respective organizations are creating fertile ground for collaboration between private companies and government space agencies, and among the agencies themselves.

"All the missions that NASA undertakes are perfectly aligned with the Japanese space agency."

MILESTONES

Sugita began her remarks by pointing out that she stood as an example of JAXA's long-term focus on international cooperation. She has been with the agency for a quarter century, focusing on international cooperation programs and industry collaboration. For decades, JAXA has put an emphasis on hiring non-engineers to bolster their efforts in these areas.

She said that, although JAXA's budget is one-fifteenth that of NASA and one-fifth that of the European Space Agency, it is actively pursuing—and reaching—high targets. The agency is currently developing the country's new flagship launch vehicle, the H3, in conjunction with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. The first launch is scheduled for fiscal 2021. On the Earth observation front, JAXA has a new series of advanced land-observing satellites that will be used for a wide range of purposes, such as regional observation, disaster monitoring, and resource surveying. The latest entry in this series, the ALOS-3, is also scheduled to be launched in fiscal 2021.

Japan also recently reached a milestone in manned space flight. On November 16, Soichi Noguchi, a former NASA and current JAXA astronaut, traveled to the *International Space Station (ISS)* as the first Japanese astronaut to fly aboard a US commercial spacecraft, the SpaceX *Dragon*. Noguchi will be followed by Akihiko Hoshide, who is scheduled to travel to the ISS and serve as commander of the station in spring.

Sugita also highlighted the scientific significance of the *Hayabusa2* mission and pointed out that the recovery of the landing capsule wouldn't have been possible without the assistance of the Australian government, which facilitated the entry of more than 80 Japanese personnel into the country despite the Covid-19 pandemic.



PHOTO: NASA

JAXA astronaut Akihiko Hoshide will take command of the *ISS* next spring.

PRIVATE POWER

JAXA is also making strides in developing the reach of its space industry and collaborations with the private sector. The Japanese government's Space Industry Vision 2030 has set a target of doubling the market size of the space industry—valued at ¥1.2 trillion as of 2015—by the early 2030s. And in March 2018, then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced that the government would support up to ¥100 billion for new space business through public investors. The agency also has a strong focus on helping startups involved in the space industry move from the startup stage to commercialization.

A key element of startup support is the JAXA Space Innovation through Partnership (J-SPARC) program, set up in May 2018. As Sugita explained, J-SPARC supports “the private sector through feasibility studies as well as research and development, utilizing JAXA's space development technologies and know-how. So far, more than 30 companies have participated in this program and are gradually developing their businesses.”



PHOTO: NASA/JOEL KOWSKY

The United States and Australia signed a letter of intent on September 21, 2019, at NASA Headquarters in Washington.

The Japanese government's Basic Plan on Space Policy has set a target of doubling the market size of the space industry . . . by the early 2030s.

She pointed out that this marks a different approach from that which JAXA has traditionally used when working with private industry. “It used to be that JAXA developed something and asked industry, ‘Why don’t you use this for your business?’ But we realized that this wasn’t a feasible approach. This led us to taking a joint development approach and, if a private company has an idea, we start planning from the outset and work together at an early stage.”

JAXA also has cooperative arrangements with the Innovation Network Corporation of Japan and the Development Bank of Japan, Inc., while the agency itself would be allowed to make direct investments as early as April 2021, in accordance with law.

Some examples of how these public-private collaborations have borne fruit include a space travel business launched by PD Aerospace Co., Ltd., as well as a space avatar program run by ANA Holdings Inc. that allows individuals to operate a system from the ground and experience viewing the Earth as if they were aboard the *ISS*. There is also a general incorporated association called Spacefood Sphere, originally started as the J-SPARC program, which aims to solve challenges concerning food security on Earth and in space. Projects such as these illustrate how companies can find success while solving technical problems and sparking the public’s interest in space.

REACHING ORBIT

Townsend, who was next to speak, explained that the Australian Space Agency (ASA) is quite young. Formed just three years ago, ASA moved into its location at Lot Fourteen, Adelaide’s new innovation hub, in February 2020. But JAXA and Australia have been collaborating for 20 years, and cooperation on

science projects goes back four decades. Last year, Japan and Australia signed a memorandum of cooperation that covers collaboration in robotics, space situational awareness, advanced communication, quantum technologies, and the use of GPS.

As Townsend explained, ASA has a number of roles. “Looking at market gaps, emerging areas, and areas of competitive advantage, the main areas of focus are developing national capabilities and leading international collaboration,” she said. “For example, with JAXA, we leverage global partnerships to open the door to Australian innovators. We also support young Australians to take up STEM careers and help Australian businesses participate in the global space market through infrastructure funding and enabling international space investment.”

While ASA is still in its infancy, the agency recently achieved a significant milestone: establishing the Moon to Mars initiative, a \$150 million investment intended to boost the growth of Australia’s space industry. Within this initiative is the Supply Chain Program, which seeks to involve Australian businesses that could be capable of meeting the standards to contribute to space, or which might not have considered entering the space effort but have applicable technologies. In addition to increasing Australia’s domestic engagement with space projects, the initiative brings ASA in close conjunction with NASA’s Moon to Mars exploration program and demonstrates Australia’s ability to play an important role in these ambitious endeavors.

INDUSTRY HUB

ASA is also working alongside another organization in Adelaide: the South Australian Space Industry Centre (SASIC). As Townsend explained, this is “a cross-government group working with key



NASA astronauts Anne McClain (left) and Christina Koch inside JAXA’s Kibo laboratory module on the *ISS*.

PHOTO: NASA

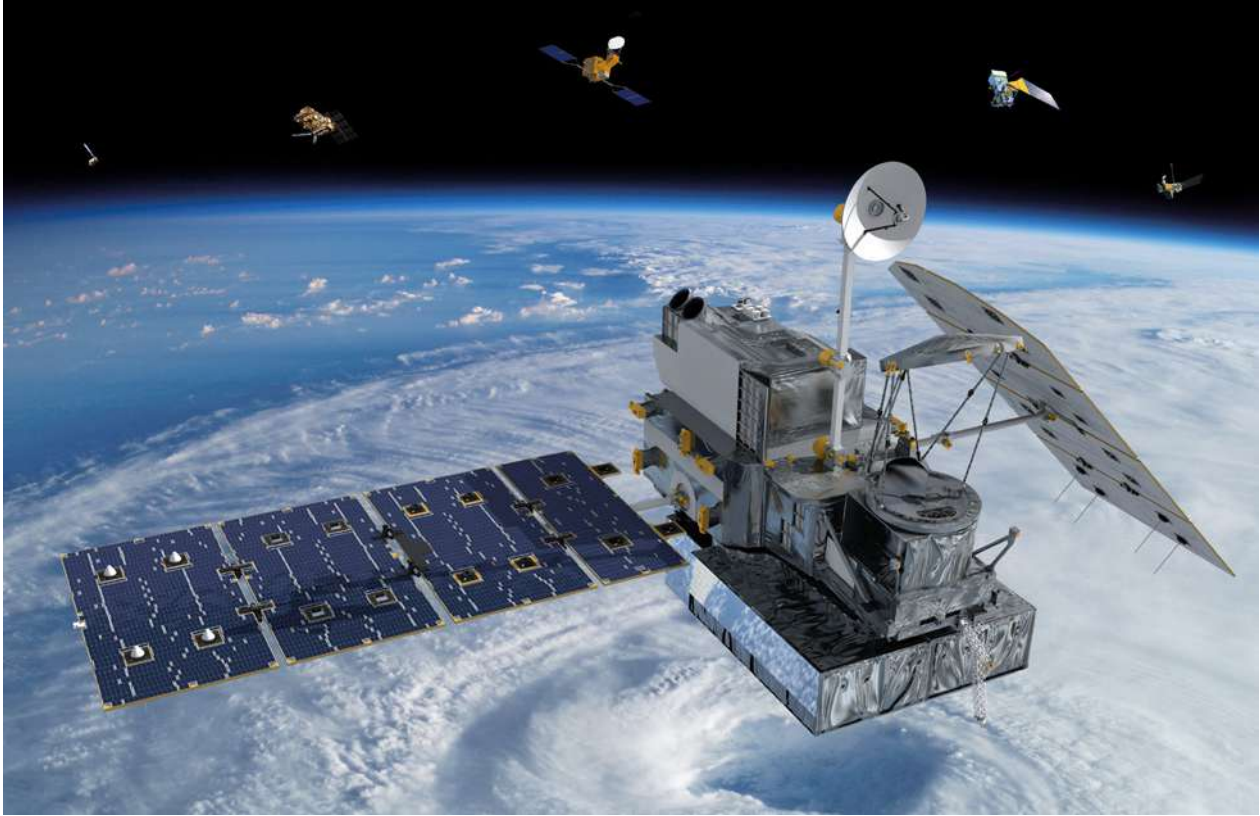


IMAGE: NASA

The joint NASA–JAXA Global Precipitation Measurement Core Observatory

stakeholders to grow South Australia’s space economy. The center supports numerous industry initiatives, including scholarships for graduates, internships in Australia, and a work experience program for South Australian high school students.

“SASIC has also developed the Space Innovation Plan, which is an A\$4 million plan that aims to support potential entrepreneurs in space-oriented startups through a number of initiatives.” She added that the center also works within the Growth State Strategy, a partnership between the Government of South Australia and industry, to boost the economy through business expansion and innovation. It aims to drive the state’s contribution to the ASA goal of tripling the size of Australia’s domestic space industry to A\$12 billion by 2040.

South Australia is a thriving nexus of activity for the country’s space industry. There are more than 80 space-related organizations in the region, employing some 1,200 people. Standouts in this area include Neumann Space, which is developing a new electric propulsion system that improves the thrust performance of satellites; and Southern Launch, which is establishing the country’s first commercial orbital launch facility.

Townsend also highlighted Myriota, a software company that has partnered with the California-based Tyvak Nano-Satellite Systems, Inc. to provide direct-to-satellite connectivity using the Internet of Things. All of these developments, she said, are indications that, although Australia’s space industry is quite young, it shows great promise.

FUTURE FLIGHT

The final speaker was McIntosh, who explained the ways in which NASA partners with organizations such as JAXA, collaborates with private industry, and conducts in-house research on the technologies needed to achieve the “cutting-edge missions of the future.”

When it comes to international collaboration, McIntosh said that “the agency in the world that is most closely aligned with NASA is probably JAXA. Whether it’s aeronautics research,

human exploration, data science, or Earth and space science, all the missions that NASA undertakes are perfectly aligned with the Japanese space agency. That’s what I think makes JAXA such a great partner.”

He then pointed out that, while many people assume NASA is the sole organization in charge of space projects in the United States, there are a wide range of stakeholders contributing to the effort. To help unify their work, the administration of President Donald Trump reestablished the National Space Council, which had been created by President George H. W. Bush in 1989 but which disbanded in 1993. The purpose of the council is to ensure that those involved in commercial, civil, and security space matters are working together cohesively.

As a collective industry, the US involvement in space is staggering—\$17.5 billion was invested in private-sector companies



PHOTO: NASA

NASA selected three commercial moon landing providers for the Artemis program.



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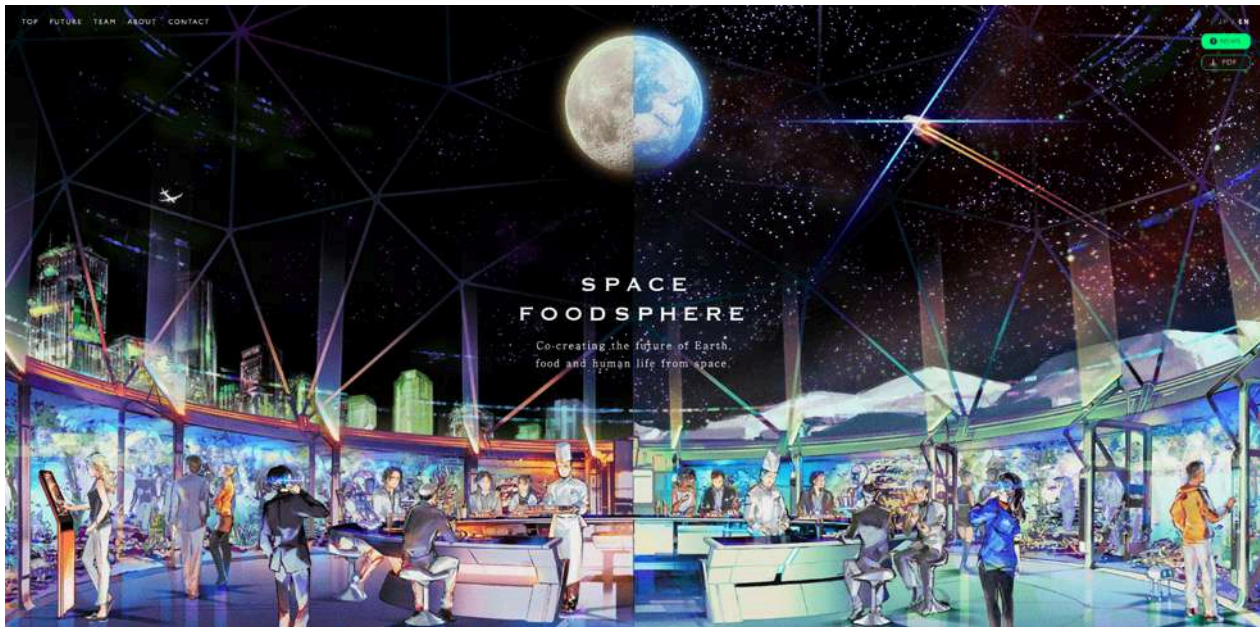
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in 2020 alone. The United States accounts for 62 percent of the world's total space industry, which Morgan Stanley projects will generate \$1 trillion in annual revenue by 2040.

BOLDLY GOING

Given the current strength of the market, and its exponential growth potential, McIntosh believes it is even more important that NASA take bold steps to meet the moment. One such step is the Artemis program, which aims to send a manned mission to the south pole of the moon by 2024, with long-term goals of establishing a way station that can be used for future Mars missions.

Another area that is primed for great progress is private companies taking a leading role in space projects. Of course, this is already happening domestically—with players such as SpaceX, Northrop Grumman Corporation, and Sierra Nevada Corporation—but there are significant examples of Japan-US collaboration. One involves Nanoracks LLC, which handles satellite launch services and other in-space services, and two Japanese businesses: Space BD Inc. and GITAI.

With aerospace company Space BD, they are working to deploy satellites from the Japanese Experiment Module, a science module on the ISS. And they are working with the space robotics startup GITAI to develop a technical demonstration of the robot in Nanoracks' airlock on the ISS.

Japanese companies are also partnering with their US counterparts in lunar efforts, including the Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) project, through which nine companies were selected to bid on developing landers that would deliver NASA payloads to the lunar surface. One of the contractors, Massachusetts-based Draper, is partnering with ispace, a Japanese company that develops commercial lunar landers. And Astrobotic Technology, headquartered in Pennsylvania, will be sending Japan's first lunar rover—*Yaoki*, developed by Tokyo-based Dymon—to the moon with its robotic lander.

In closing, McIntosh explained that the agency's aim was to help stimulate not just domestic industry, but the global space economy as a whole by being an active customer of private

companies. "NASA's goal," he explained, "is to partner with industry to achieve a strong ecosystem in which NASA is one of many customers, purchasing services and capabilities at lower costs. We want to be a customer—one of many—so the industry is sustainable and able to thrive."

CONTINUING MISSION

Like *Hayabusa2*, whose journey is far from done, these national space agencies are charting new ground to help usher in a bright future. The next stop for the Japanese probe on its newly extended mission is the asteroid 1998 KY26, which it is expected to reach in 2031.

But many more possibilities and missions are on the horizon for NASA, JAXA, and ASA. Through multilateral collaboration and support of the private industry, the United States, Japan, and Australia are leading the way into space. ■

SPEAKERS

Sally Townsend

Commissioner
Department for Trade and Investment
Government of South Australia

Garvey McIntosh

NASA attaché
Embassy of the United States, Tokyo

Naoko Sugita

Advisor to the director
International Relations and Research Department
JAXA





CHANGING LANDSCAPE?

Study offers preview of how pandemic may change cities

By Julian Ryall

Tokyo has maintained its position as the third most attractive city in the world in which to live and work, according to the recently unveiled *Global Power City Index 2020*, compiled by the Mori Memorial Foundation's Institute for Urban Strategies and released in December.

The Japanese capital once again comes in behind London and New York, but ahead of Paris and Singapore. The authors of the annual study caution, however, that the inevitable impact of the coronavirus pandemic will not be reflected in the rankings until this year's figures can be compiled.

"There have not been too many changes in the top-ranked cities this year—although we are seeing some distancing between the top two cities of London and New York from the others—but Tokyo is stagnating somewhat," said Heizo Takenaka, chairman of the Institute for Urban Strategies' executive committee.

EARLY GLIMPSE

The 2020 index incorporates a survey designed to give some early indicators of how the pandemic will have affected cities and the people who inhabit them, Takenaka said at a press event held on December 8 to release the report. The ongoing health crisis is likely to impact areas of the survey such as

workplace flexibility, as well as the need for greater internet access and higher speeds, as more people work from home or remotely.

The study was first published in 2008 and now ranks 48 major cities around the world in terms of magnetism—their power to attract creative individuals and enterprises. Cities are rated according to 70 indicators across six functions:

- Economy
- Research and development
- Cultural interaction
- Livability
- Environment
- Accessibility

The authors fine-tune the indicators and their data-collection methods each year to better reflect the changing conditions that impact global cities. In 2020, among the indicators added to better reflect the needs of residents are:

- Air quality
- Ease of mobility by taxi or bicycle
- Number of arrivals and departures at the airport

Seventeen of the 48 cities examined this year are in Europe, eight are in North America, and 13 are in Asia. Since the first report was issued, the same five cities have occupied the top positions, albeit in different orders.



HEIZO TAKENAKA
Chairman of the executive committee
Institute for Urban Strategies
The Mori Memorial Foundation

HOLDING STRONG

Despite ongoing concerns over the impact of Britain's imminent departure from the European Union, London maintained its overall top position for a ninth consecutive year, placing in the top 10 for all categories except the environment.

The authors identified a sharp improvement in the British capital's accessibility ranking, where it overtook Paris to claim the top spot, while the city retained a clear lead in the area of cultural interaction. On the downside, London's economy ranking fell for a second year as a consequence of a drop in the growth rate of its gross domestic product.

New York once again dominated the economy category, with improved scores in areas of total employment and employees in business

support services. It also earned the highest ratings in the variety of workplace options section.

The Big Apple held on to its top ranking in research and development as well as cultural interaction, although a relatively poor score for workstyle flexibility damaged its standing in the livability rankings, the city's weakest area.

Tokyo rounded out the top three, with the report pointing to consistent strengths in all areas. The metropolis also managed to lift its score in terms of the environment and accessibility.

The pandemic may very well reverse the centuries-long trend of people and businesses centralizing themselves in urban areas.



Despite Tokyo hanging on to fourth place in the economy rankings, the gap with Singapore, which placed fifth in the category, has narrowed. Livability was the sole area where Tokyo's rankings fell, primarily due to a decline in scores for

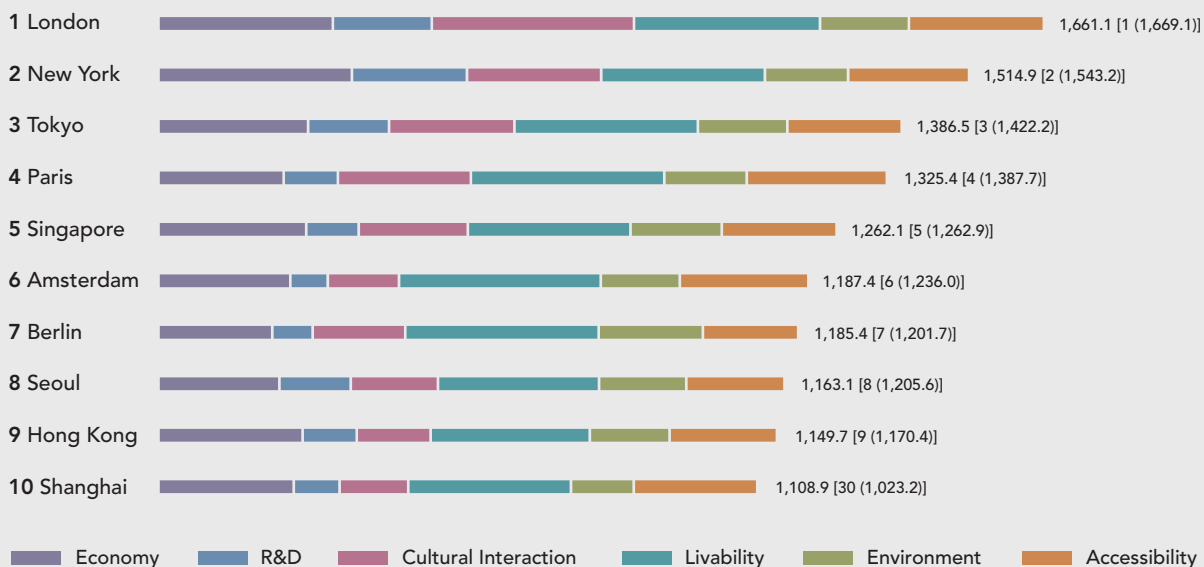
workstyle flexibility.

The city has risen in the rankings for cultural interaction since it was selected in 2013 as the host

of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That ranking has not been affected by the one-year delay resulting from the pandemic, but the report points out that there is still room for improvement in terms of nightlife options and the number of luxury hotel rooms.

With Paris fourth and Singapore fifth in the overall rankings, the top 10 was rounded out by Amsterdam, Berlin, Seoul, Hong Kong, and Shanghai—which made the largest overall jump, soaring from 30th in the previous year.

Full List (Numbers in brackets indicate the previous year's results.)



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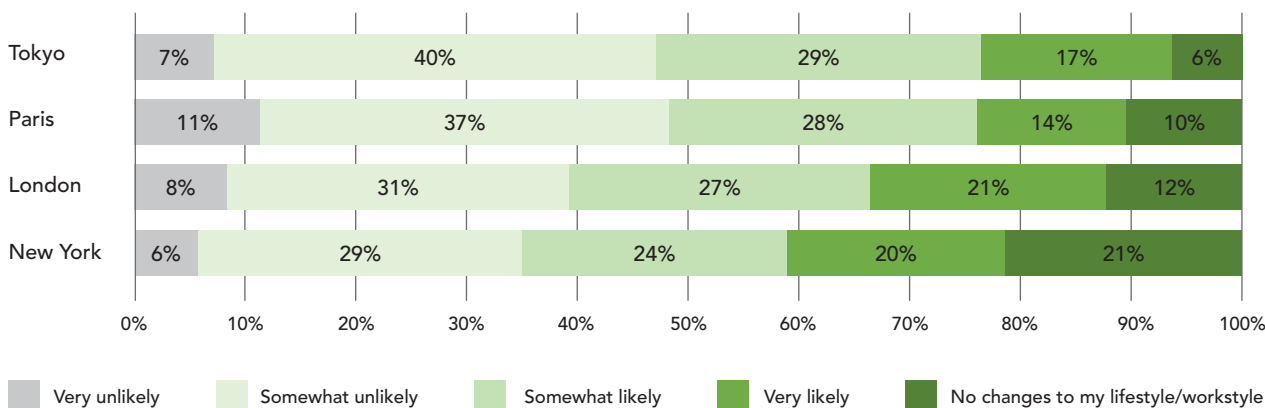
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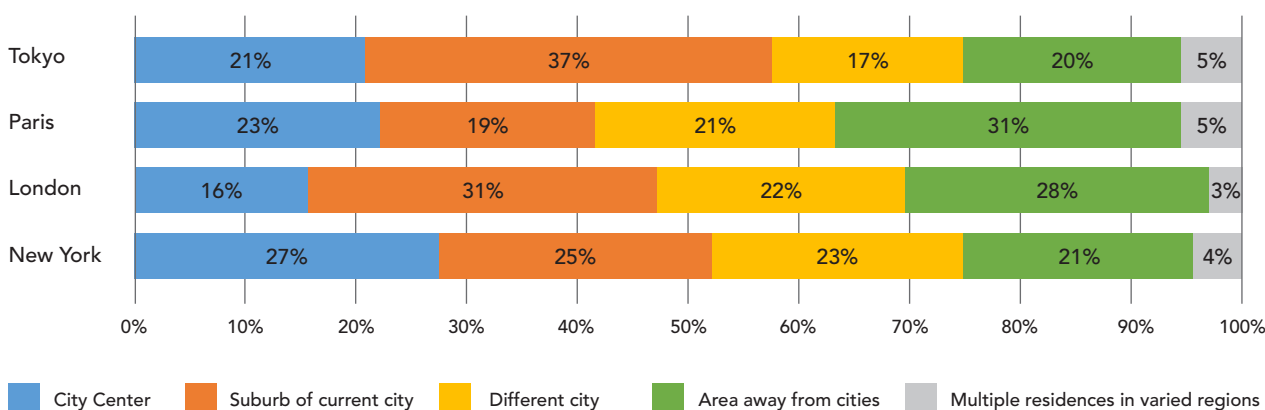
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Due to changes in your work style and lifestyle resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, what is the likelihood of you moving your place of residence?



If you were to move your place of residence, where are you likely to move to?



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COVID IMPACT

With authorities around the world having been forced to introduce lockdowns, travel bans, and other restrictions on movement, the coronavirus has, inevitably, had a significant effect on the economic networks and lifestyles of city residents. And while the impact of the pandemic was visible in a number of indicators, such as workstyle flexibility, the true scale of change is not yet apparent, the authors warned.

Nevertheless, the researchers did issue a separate questionnaire in October and November. About 1,000 residents of the report's top five cities were polled in an effort to obtain some early understanding of the impact of the health crisis on urban lifestyles and how that might affect the competition.

About 90 percent of those who took part said they had been influenced by the pandemic to some degree, indicating that the attractiveness of cities will be impacted in the 2021 report.

Roughly 40 percent of respondents said they want to work from home, and another 40 percent would like to work at the office, after the pandemic has subsided. This result indicates there is a need to reevaluate the workspaces of the new normal, and underlines the demand for diversified options.

The questionnaire also asks people whether they might relocate as a result of the pandemic and, if so, to where they

might choose to move. Some 20 percent of Tokyo residents and 40 percent of New Yorkers said they would consider moving, with responses ranging from somewhere closer to the city center to the suburbs or even a different city entirely.

People in Tokyo and London favored the suburbs, while New Yorkers and residents of Singapore were in favor of moving closer to a city center.

The implications, the report concludes, are that—thanks to workstyles that permit people to conduct business no matter their location—a new generation has the freedom to relocate to cities anywhere in the world that they find attractive. This means that cities must adapt to ensure they meet the needs and ambitions of a more mobile workforce.



HIROO ICHIKAWA
Executive director
The Mori Memorial Foundation

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LOCAL CHALLENGES

Mobility will be of particular concern to Tokyo, which came in 13th globally for variety of workplace options. The number of coworking facilities in the city is virtually the same as in Madrid, but lags far behind Barcelona, Los Angeles, and regional rivals Singapore and Hong Kong.

Even more worryingly, Tokyo ranked 41st in terms of work-style flexibility, which falls under the study's livability function. This dragged it down to 12th overall in this section of the study. The user-friendly cities of Amsterdam, Madrid, Berlin, Paris, and Barcelona topped the rankings for livability, offering some hints as to the measures that Tokyo should adopt to make the city more appealing to its residents and workers.

Surprisingly, Japan was also relatively unimpressive in terms of fixed broadband speeds, being left behind by Madrid, Paris, and even Bangkok.

Yet another area of concern for companies and organizations that have operations in Tokyo is the city's poor showing in terms of skilled human resources, including people with English language skills.

The report's findings were presented by Hiroo Ichikawa, executive director of The Mori Memorial Foundation and

professor emeritus at Meiji University, who singled out this failing as being significant to the city's overall ranking.

"For availability of skilled human resources, Tokyo ranks somewhat low at 38, and this fall was due to worse scores in English ability," he said. "So compared with the top cities, like New York, Hong Kong and Singapore, Tokyo is somewhat low."

ROAD AHEAD

In a forward-looking analysis of how the coronavirus might shape this year's findings and final report, Michael Batty, a

professor at University College London, said the pandemic may very well reverse the centuries-long trend of people and businesses centralizing themselves in urban areas.

Cities may well decentralize . . . hosting human interaction and business transactions that need not be conducted face-to-face as frequently as in the past.

Social distancing is "having an enormous impact on the way we behave in cities, through altered working, living, and mobility styles," he said.

In a series of predictions, Batty suggests an increased shift away from motorized transportation over shorter distances to walking and cycling, along with greater use of individual passenger transportation, meaning a car rather than public buses, trains, and subway.

With more people working from home, there would be a reconfiguration of both the home and the traditional office space. This, in turn, would reduce the need for public transportation and, he suggests, cut our consumption of fast food, which would have clear public health benefits.

"Over the medium term, there may well be shifts in where people live and work and seek entertainment," he said. "Over the longer term, cities may well decentralize, and their biggest centers may become higher profile and more compact, hosting human interaction and business transactions that need not be conducted face-to-face as frequently as in the past." ■



MICHAEL BATTY
Professor
University College London

BACK TO THE OFFICE

Optimism abounds for 2021, but what changes must we make?

By Malcolm Foster



PHOTO: HERMAN MILLER

Now that coronavirus vaccines are soon to be rolled out, 2021 is likely to serve as a bridge from the reclusive pandemic lifestyle to a new normal. Workers will continue returning to downtown offices, but probably not in the numbers seen before Covid-19. When they do, their mindsets, behaviors and expectations will have changed. And so must companies, in their approach to everything from space layout to sanitation to where work actually gets done, specialists from several industries told *The ACCJ Journal*.

Remote working from home, satellite offices and temporary workspaces—probably the biggest fundamental workplace change resulting from the pandemic—are here to stay. Despite the hardships, the coronavirus has brought flexibility to Japan's rigid workplace culture.

That doesn't mean the central office is obsolete, but its function has changed. It's no longer essentially the only place where proper work gets done. It will become more of a hub that meets various practical needs and the place where corporate culture is built—a place where employees can gather to collaborate, meet clients, hold large meetings and, of course, do their jobs.

“The office still has an important role. It can build corporate culture by encouraging socialization and relationship-building, and encourage teamwork and collaboration,” said Keiko Maezawa, marketing manager for office furniture maker Herman Miller Japan, Ltd. “In addition, the office can support individual work for those who can't easily focus at home. And by distributing work tasks across various locations, organizations don't need high-density office space and can create spaces that employees really need.”





REASSURANCES

Another significant change in the mindsets of employees and customers alike is an enhanced expectation of cleanliness and sanitation, said Justin Brown, marketing director for the Japan institutional division of Ecolab G.K. The company provides hygiene and sanitation solutions for a variety of industries, including restaurants, hotels, supermarkets, as well as food and beverage factories.

“The concept of guest assurance is a big theme we’re seeing,” Brown said, noting that the idea can be applied to employees in an office. “How can businesses reassure guests who used to frequent their establishments that it is safe to do so now? Even if they are doing the right thing, if they don’t make that clear—and do it in a manner that the public can understand—then that’s going to be directly tied to business results. This actually carries over into the office, in that the company needs to reassure their workers that they’ve taken steps to ensure safety in the new normal.”

Such steps vary depending on the situation, but generally it means that companies will have to spend more time and money maintaining an elevated level of cleanliness and sanitation in workplaces, restaurants, and stores, including the widespread use of masks and hand sanitizer, as well as extra room to safely social distance.



KEIKO MAEZAWA
Marketing manager
Herman Miller Japan, Ltd.

“By distributing work tasks across various locations, organizations don’t need high-density office space and can create spaces that employees really need.”

BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

Maintaining a clean work or retail space isn’t just a health concern, it’s a business imperative, several contributors said. Workers who feel safe and cared for are happier and more productive. And customers—now much more educated about, and sensitive to, sanitation—will avoid places and businesses they view as unsafe or unsanitary.

That’s evident in online restaurant and shop reviews, Brown said. “People will say, ‘I walked by this restaurant and the guy behind the counter wasn’t wearing a mask. I’m not going in there.’”

The pandemic upended the company’s 2020 marketing plan, Brown said. Like so many other businesses, they were forced to adjust. That flexibility will be vital in coming months as well, he and others noted.

“The pandemic forced us to adjust our plans and focus heavily on Covid-19 response, so I would say flexibility is the key word that has come out from this time.”

One way that Ecolab adapted to Covid-19 was not just delivering disinfectants but also providing clear guidance for clients on how to use the products effectively in a pandemic, and updating that information continually with the latest research, Brown said. “It’s not just about, ‘Here you go, here’s your bottle of disinfectant, please follow the instructions on the label.’ It’s more around, ‘This is the process, these are the areas you need to be thinking about, this is the frequency in which you should be cleaning,’ all those things.”

Ecolab also provided digital files with signage highlighting sanitation procedures and the disinfectant products in use that businesses could print and display. “What we’ve found is that not only are customers using these signs, but their guests are reading them,” Brown said. Such increased signage will be a fixture in all manner of businesses for the foreseeable future.

sanitation procedures and the disinfectant products in use that businesses could print and display. “What we’ve found is that not only are customers using these signs, but their guests are reading them,” Brown





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JUSTIN BROWN
Marketing director
Ecolab G.K.

THINK ABOUT SPACE

Juggling conflicting pressures about space is another challenge that companies are facing. With more employees working remotely for the foreseeable future, some organizations are moving to downsize their office space. But others want to keep, change, or even expand their offices to ensure adequate room to social distance, said Hiroteru Nin, country director for Japan at The Executive Centre, which provides premium flexible workspaces and offices in central Tokyo and Yokohama.

“Companies aren’t really shrinking their office space so much as adjusting,” said Nin, whose company saw a 20-percent increase in inquiries for its workspace most months this year. “There’s going to be a mix of remote working and also social distancing in the office. It’s not going back 100 percent to how things were pre-Covid-19, therefore flexibility is an important element when thinking about office space.”

Also, there may be a reversal in the trend toward free seating in offices, Nin said, amid concerns that many may avoid using shared facilities, and would prefer to be in private offices but still have the flexibility to collaborate with others when necessary.



With a jump in the number of employees working from home, furniture maker Herman Miller saw a rise in sales for its work chairs. “This trend is expected to continue this year, and we expect to see an increase in not only work chairs, but also monitor arms and desks, so that workers can view their monitors in a healthy posture, just like working in the office,” Maezawa explained.

Businesses that had to scramble to find temporary office space during the pandemic are likely to keep that as a viable work option, providers such as Servcorp Limited and The Executive Centre said.



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They have also come up with creative solutions for office needs amid the outbreak. Servcorp, which aims to offer custom alternatives to long-term office leases, saw a jump in demand from entrepreneurs and small businesses for its Virtual Offices, which give clients all the services of an office, including a receptionist and a downtown Tokyo business address and phone number, while working remotely, said Marketing Manager Warren Pohl.

SEISMIC SHIFT

For all the pain and hassles that coronavirus has inflicted—causing activities to be restricted, events to be canceled, and profits to erode in many industries—the new flexibility it has brought to the Japanese workplace has been a long-term positive, contributors said. The pandemic has achieved in a matter of months the sort of labor reforms that government initiatives may have accomplished only over many years, if ever.

“The pandemic has brought about a seismic shift toward the way we work and our attitudes toward the office,” said Pohl. “It has caused us to reimagine where and how we work.”

“Companies have finally realized how antiquated and unhealthy the traditional way of working is, and that introducing flexibility has many benefits,” he added. “They have realized that employees are more productive, and that they’re technologically capable of running their operations with a more flexible approach to work than was believed in pre-Covid-19 times.”

“I’ve had multiple conversations with customers who had the digitalization of X, Y, or Z on a three-year plan that was shortened to become a three-month plan,” said Ecolab’s Brown.

Many companies have phased out the need for *hanko* (personal seals) on internal company documents and proposals, and faxes have become digitized.

And while crises can bring positive changes, they can also wreak havoc on business results. So, after the upheaval of 2020, there’s optimism that next year will bring economic renewal.

“We anticipate a strong recovery in 2021 of our customer base’s businesses and, therefore, we are trying to look at the situation in a positive light,” Brown said. “By keeping that flexible mindset, which we adopted at the beginning of the pandemic, we’re hoping for a much brighter 2021.” ■



HIROTERU NIN
Country director for Japan
The Executive Centre



WARREN POHL
Marketing manager
Servcorp Limited



TOKYO WOMEN IN VENTURE CAPITAL

New grassroots group to diversify Japan's investment industry

By John Amari

When Sophie Meralli looked online last summer for a community of women in the venture capital (VC) industry in Japan, her search came up empty. While she found industry events that had as their focus women in VC, there was no organization dedicated to connecting them as professionals.

Within weeks, however, that changed. In August, Meralli reached out to a friend, Shino Furukawa, and asked her to join forces. The result was Tokyo Women in VC, a closed community for women in VC- and investment-related fields in Japan, but with a focus on Tokyo.

The organization was co-founded by Meralli, an investor at global venture capital fund Eight Roads Ventures, and Furukawa, an investor at Pola Orbis Capital, a division of cosmetics company Pola Orbis Holdings Inc.

Through Tokyo Women in VC, Meralli and Furukawa aim not only to facilitate networking and collaboration among professional women in the industry in Japan, but to open pipelines and remove barriers, create programs for career development, and connect women in the industry to peers globally. Ultimately, their goal is to enrich diversity in the risk capital sector, improve the success of women founders, and increase the industry's overall bottom line.

Speaking to *The ACCJ Journal*, Meralli explained, "This community is really about empowering women and creating more networking opportunities for them, given the fact that the VC world is very network- and people-driven."

NETWORKED FOR SUCCESS

Tokyo Women in VC, which began as a community on social media platform Facebook, has some 34 members and is growing. The group has four key goals:

- Networking and community building
- Deal flow and knowledge sharing
- Career development
- Increased access to female founders and VC candidates

To tackle networking and community building, Tokyo Women in VC will facilitate in-person and online events for women in the industry and adjacent fields, such as investment banking and corporate development.

As for increasing deal flow and knowledge sharing, the community plans to create seminars for members focused on specific sectors and industry trends.

Career development, meanwhile, will involve establishing a mentorship scheme, running seminars on global and local best practices, and sharing knowledge on fund creation and management.

And to increase access for female founders and candidate venture capitalists (VCs), the group aims to launch joint events—

where founders meet investors—and raise awareness of VC as a career option for women in other fields.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Tokyo Women in VC is off to a solid start, Meralli noted. At their launch event in Tokyo in December, several women in the industry joined in person or participated remotely. Economist Kathy Matsui, who is vice chair and chief Japan strategist at Goldman Sachs, addressed the gathering.

Matsui, a champion of women in business, is in part noted for the Womenomics reports she has written, starting in 1999, on the link between Japan's gender employment gap and gross domestic product.

Since she penned the first report, Japan's female labor participation rate has risen to record levels that surpass those of the United States and of European countries, according to the Womenomics 5.0 report, published in 2019.

This leads one to ask if there is a need for a women-focused organization for the VC industry in Japan. Yes, Meralli said.

Matsui shares a similar sentiment.

While describing areas of success in women's participation in the workplace in Japan, in her 2019 report she notes areas still ripe for improvement.

There's "a dearth of female leaders, gender pay gaps, inflexible labor contracts, tax disincentives, insufficient caregiving capacity, and unconscious biases," the report states.

In their own research, Meralli and her group agree with the report. Tokyo Women in VC—and, indeed, other organiza-

tions—have found stark gender disparities, particularly in the VC and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

HOMOPHILY

In a recent online survey, Tokyo Women in VC found that the participation of women in the industry in Japan leaves a lot to be desired. According to their findings, 91 percent of VCs in Japan have no female partners; 59 percent of VC funds have no women on their investment team; and 44 percent of funds do not have any women employees.

Further, only 13 percent of VC employees, 10 percent of actual VCs, and three percent of VC partners are women. The last number, in particular, is in accord with Matsui's lament about a "dearth of female leaders" in corporate Japan, despite improvements on other rungs of the corporate ladder.

In part due to the anemic representation of women VCs, the number of female Japanese founders lags the average of their cohort in other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries.

"Venture capital is about nurturing and supporting founders throughout their journey. So, you start [by creating a] trust

"Homophily—has not only perpetuated the exclusion of women in the past but continues to hamper the VC industry's ability to diversify today."

relationship with the founder. And, because of homophily, you tend to do that more with people of the same gender," Meralli said, speaking of the tendency for people to be drawn to others who are similar to them. "This means a female VC can have more chances to fund—or is more likely, or more willing, to fund—women entrepreneurs." Of course, this requires more of women to be in decision-making positions.



Tokyo Women in VC launch event at Cambridge Innovation Center, Tokyo in December 2020

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Commencement ceremony on the MIT Cambridge campus in June 2018

GRASSROOTS CHANGE

Homophily can be a barrier to access for women in industries, such as the VC industry, that are majority male.

This arises in areas such as old-boy university and work networks, social class, and even racial and gender identity, argues Siri Chilazi, a research fellow at the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School.

“VCs are extremely homogeneous and similar to each other in terms of gender, race, educational background, and work experience,” Chilazi writes in a 2019 report entitled *Advancing Gender Equality in Venture Capital: What the Evidence Says about the Current State of the Industry and How to Promote More Gender Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion*.

“This demographic uniformity resulting from a common human tendency of individuals to associate and bond with similar others—homophily—has not only perpetuated the exclusion of women in the past but continues to hamper the VC industry’s ability to diversify today.”

If, as the research suggests, homophily is a primary factor in the under-representation of women in the VC world and the underperformance of women founders—in the United States as in Japan, for instance—then groups such as Tokyo Women in VC are well placed to begin tackling it.

Indeed, the community was, in part, inspired by similar organizations in the United States, such as Breaking 7%, a Boston-based women-in-VC group, and All Raise, a non-profit in San Francisco that aims to accelerate the success of female investors and founders.

Tokyo Women in VC also works closely with Global Women in VC, a community of some 2,500 industry professionals from around the world connected through the workplace communications platform Slack. Meralli and Furukawa manage the Tokyo channel on the app.

FINDING YES

Before relocating to Japan in 2020 and co-founding Tokyo Women in VC, Meralli worked at venture capital firm Innospark Ventures in Boston. As their first employee, she sourced and invested in several early-stage artificial intelligence startups in a variety of industries.

A French national, Meralli is a certified public accountant who began her career at professional services multinational Ernst & Young, with stints at the company’s Paris and Tokyo offices.

She also holds a master’s degrees in business administration from the MIT Sloan School of Management, and science in accounting and finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a bachelor of arts from Paris Dauphine University. Which begs the question: What makes for a good venture capitalist?

“That’s actually a great question. Because there’s no right background. I know many VCs who previously worked in a startup, investment bank, consulting, or even as a lawyer—it doesn’t really matter.

“But I think that the most important thing is intellectual curiosity. Because you’re going to assess things that you don’t know about. So, being able to dig deeper is surely a skill. But if you don’t have that passion or that curiosity to, let’s say, learn about organs-on-a-chip (OOCs), and to read tons of papers about it, then you won’t be able to enjoy it that much.”

Meralli is referring to a time when she worked on a deal involving a company that was developing complex in vitro models such as OOCs—a cell-culture technology, or artificial organ, that mimics the phenotypic and molecular functions of actual organs. The technology is used in drug discovery research.

Is there more, beyond intellectual curiosity, required to being a good VC? There is. As Meralli explained: “The other part is communication and people skills. VCs develop strong relationships with entrepreneurs to support them in their journey. Many aspects of communication, such as transparency, managing expectation, listening, and conveying feedback, are very important to develop long-term trust.”

People skills are also important as VCs meet new entrepreneurs and peers on a daily basis.

When meeting an entrepreneur, a good venture capitalist needs to be able to analyze information in real time,” she added. “Every interaction with an entrepreneur is precious, and it’s important to understand their business, ask the right questions, and convey feedback to have productive discussions on both ends.” ■



AI startups and investors networking event in Boston in 2019

HIGH MARKS

TUJ Continuing Education harnesses industry links to develop Tokyo's professional community

One thing the pandemic has made clear is that we can't take anything for granted. Companies have had to rapidly adjust their business models, and employees—from executives on down—have had to build new skills. Now is the ideal time to sharpen existing competencies and develop new ones, and there may be no better choice for doing so than the Continuing Education program at Temple University, Japan Campus (TUJ).

The parent institution of TUJ, Temple University, was founded in Philadelphia in 1884. From the beginning, an emphasis was placed on educating both traditional college students and those who might be pursuing higher education later in life. Temple came to Japan almost 40 years ago, during a time when many US universities were setting up campuses in the country. While nearly all those eventually closed their campuses, TUJ has continued to go strong and is now the oldest and largest foreign university in Japan. It is also the only of its kind recognized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology as a full degree-granting institution, which is due, in part, to the university's dedicated efforts to integrate into its host country.

DEEP TIES

TUJ maintains very close connections with the main campus in Philadelphia, but, over its time in Japan, it has evolved into something of a hybrid, local-foreign institution that draws on the strengths of both sides. As Dr. Justin Sanders, director of the Continuing Education program explained, this long history allows the university to develop and maintain a wealth of connections. "Members of our community have deep ties with local institutions, such as Tokyo American Club, the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, Showa Women's University, and the Japan Student Services Organization," he said.

"As a university with a strong business focus, we also have very strong links to the business community through our internship programs, Continuing Education program, and Corporate Education. In Continuing Education, for example, many of our instructors run their own businesses in Tokyo and a number of organizations utilize our courses for employee development. I think this is because we are able to provide a truly international perspective while still being intimately familiar with local contexts."

In addition to running their own businesses, TUJ's instructors come from a wide range of backgrounds—included among the university's staff are practicing lawyers, chartered accountants, and executive coaches.

Ed Thompson, a marketing instructor at TUJ who also runs his own agency, explained that companies and employees can benefit from the diverse backgrounds of the instructors and the variety of courses. "Let's say that a key person on your team, such as a project manager, excels in their current role but would benefit from improving their perspective on marketing or understanding of finance. Through individual courses and certificate programs offered in TUJ's Continuing Education program, it's possible for managers and HR departments to develop a solid path for their staff's professional development."

DIVERSE OFFERINGS

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the introduction and development of online offerings, making many of the program's courses accessible from anywhere; however, the university will maintain its commitment to in-person teaching at its new campus in Sangenjaya, in Tokyo's Setagaya Ward. In fact, Sanders credits the new campus with helping to create a strong sense of community and new opportunities for collaboration at the university. It also has some of the trappings that you'd expect of a university back in the United States, such as a private green space, comfortable lounges, and a well-stocked library with one of the largest English-language volume collections in the country.

Nonetheless, TUJ will maintain flexibility in their offerings as they go forward. Thanks to a recently formed partnership with one of the United States' leading providers of online education and professional development, TUJ will expand into new program areas—such as Six Sigma, operations management, and sustainable management—and provide everything from real-time, face-to-face classes to fully online, self-paced courses.



The famous YouTuber Chris Broad teaches a regular TUJ workshop.



Every year, TUJ develops and introduces about 20 new courses and workshops. Sanders explained that these run a wide gamut and are created in response to student interests and changes in business practices: “Basic translation courses were popular, so we developed a new certificate program which better covered the foundational skills but had electives that explored niche areas. Agile is gaining traction over traditional waterfall project management, so we introduced new courses to reflect those changes in the industry. And when schools and universities went online, we added a course in facilitating online learning to help support educators in our community.”

The university has also recently partnered with Amazon Web Services (AWS) Academy, which makes them the only institution in Japan to offer certified AWS Academy training in English. Sanders added that this makes TUJ a great resource for their corporate partners that are seeking to develop internal cloud computing capacity. In addition, through their Corporate Education program, TUJ can offer customized, long-term training for organizations, which gives individuals and businesses a full range of educational options from which to choose.

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

Sanders explained that another link between the business community and TUJ is the Friend of TUJ program, their

Another link between the business community and TUJ is the Friend of TUJ program, their corporate partnership initiative.

corporate partnership initiative. “Either for internal training needs or as an employee benefit, all members of partner organizations get a discount on course tuition and the entrance fee is waived. This has been great for attracting students from a lot of diverse industries,” he said.

“As an adult education program, diversity in the classroom and the different perspectives and experience the participants bring is extremely important to support discussion and learning. It’s also been very helpful for us to have active partners that provide feedback on their development needs. This gives us better insight into the latest industry trends so we know what programming to develop that would bring the most value.”

And TUJ is agile enough to respond to meet these needs. As a non-degree program, Continuing Education can quickly develop new courses to meet the needs of local industry partners.

SUCCESS STORIES

An example of how the TUJ Continuing Education experience helps develop real-world skills is Sravanthi Dakoiji, who has been using the program to pivot to a new career after relocating to Japan. She said: “I wanted to fill in the gaps in my understanding of running and managing a business at a larger scale. Obtaining a certificate in project management at TUJ has given me the know-how and confidence needed to explore different career opportunities.”

And as Mete Yazici’s story shows, one never knows where the educational journey can lead. Ten years ago, while preparing for the next step in his personal development, he took classes at TUJ. Now, in addition to holding a master’s degree in business administration, Yazici is working towards a doctor of psychology degree and runs his own executive coaching business. He also serves as a TUJ instructor. As he put it: “TUJ Continuing Education is an ideal choice for bilingual professionals who would like to develop their leadership and communication skills in an American-style campus in downtown Tokyo. The experience provides inspiration, intellectual challenge, and practical skills.” ■



Mete Yazici with fellow TUJ instructor Sarajejan Rossitto

Learn more: www.tuj.ac.jp/cont-ed/index.html

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DIET DAILIES

MINISTRY OF LAND, INFRASTRUCTURE,
TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

AIRLINES MULL GOVT HELP IN FACE OF COVID-19

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Japan's two major air carriers—All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd. (ANA) and Japan Airlines, Co., Ltd. (JAL)—have projected unprecedented losses for the fiscal year ending March 2021, and attention has focused on the strengthening of aid by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) in their support.

Around the world, a growing number of airlines facing insolvency have received infusions of capital. With the decline in demand on international routes expected to continue, concern has been raised over the condition of Japan's carriers. But the prospects of increasing aid—both from the perspective of the airlines and the ministry—remains vague.

One reason why the airlines are reluctant to receive capital infusion from the government is that the carriers fear this would give MLIT a greater say in their operations. Such increased involvement would threaten their independence as private-sector companies.

History provides some direction. Ten years ago, JAL had to be rescued from insolvency. The company was able to write off debts and received preferential tax treatment. ANA, however, expanded its international network and surpassed JAL, effectively making it Japan's national flag carrier. This may be why JAL management has been emphasizing that the company should emerge from the pandemic under its own power.

Meanwhile, MLIT has shown reluctance to intervene directly with infusions of capital or other assistance. The ministry insists that, compared with US carriers, ANA and JAL “still have power and are making strong efforts under these trying circumstances.”

Some forms of assistance are already being provided. These include worker subsidies as well as reduction or elimination of landing and takeoff fees.

The government has also supported the Go To Travel program as a means of recovering demand on domestic routes, and October saw an upsurge in departures from Tokyo.

Still, revenue from domestic flights and cost-cutting measures can only go so far if the zero-demand situation on international routes, which contribute to nearly half the major carriers' incomes, drags on. The government and carriers should collaborate closely to seek out new measures for assistance while ensuring that ANA and JAL can maintain their managerial independence and competitive environment.

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY,
TRADE AND INDUSTRY

CAN ZERO-CARBON TARGETS BE MET WITHOUT NUCLEAR?

At an October 26 policy speech, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga mentioned the target of reducing greenhouse-gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is expected to pursue this goal through expanded adoption of renewable energy sources, such as solar.

But industry experts have been expressing reservations over renewable energy, not only in terms of expansion and stability but also over the prospects of user rate increases. METI, in its focus on renewables, has been supporting such technical innovations as the use of hydrogen and ammonia, which do not

emit carbon dioxide during combustion. The ministry has been pursuing policies that aim to reduce the use of inefficient coal-fired generators and promote development of next-generation technology.

A key issue will be how to position nuclear power. Even in terms of covering the higher costs of renewable energy, nuclear is said to be an important source that doesn't generate CO₂. Countries that have committed to dropping nuclear power are able to cover their needs by obtaining electricity from neighbors who share a border and have surpluses, but Japan lacks this option. If greenhouse gas emissions are to be eliminated, Japan will need to look ahead to nuclear power generation.

METI's guidelines for mid- to long-term energy policies have been outlined in its Basic Energy Plan. The current plan aims to rely on nuclear power for 20–22 percent of needs. Nine nuclear reactors have resumed operation since the catastrophic accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in March 2011. To achieve the targeted level, 30 reactors will need to be brought back online. This will be exceedingly difficult considering opposition from nearby communities, not to mention concerns over nuclear power among the population at large. The Komeito party, which is part of the present coalition government, has also taken a strong anti-nuclear stance, further complicating matters for METI head Hiroshi Kajiyama. ■



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