

Consul General's New Year's Greeting



Happy New Year! My warmest greetings to each of you as welcome 2018.

This will be my third time celebrating the New Year here in Detroit. It is a pleasure to witness the excitement surrounding the holiday festivities and displays in the city and to know that the number of people visiting downtown Detroit has been increasing year after year.

Last year was a memorable one full of positive news including the opening of the Japan Gallery at the Detroit Institute of Arts, which has been strongly supported by the Japan Business Society of Detroit since the DIA's Grand Bargain. We have also seen the completion of the "Operation 1000 Cherry Trees Project," which involved the planting of a thousand trees in Dayton, Ohio—to show appreciation to the American citizens and military who so generously assisted Japan following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. I am so glad to see these long-awaited dreams of the Japanese community come to fruition at last. Last year, we also witnessed the kick-offs of new and exciting US-Japan exchange projects such as the Sakura Garden Project in Novi, Michigan and a new faculty exchange program in data research between Nagoya University and the Ohio State University.

This year, we will celebrate many sister-city anniversaries including the 55th anniversaries of the Kalamazoo-Numazu (Shizuoka Prefecture) and the Wyandotte- Komaki relationships (Aichi Prefecture); the 50th anniversaries of the Michigan State-Shiga Prefecture and the Dayton-Oiso relationships (Kanagawa Prefecture); the 40th anniversary of the Pontiac-Kusatsu relationship (Shiga Prefecture); the 30th anniversary of the Cincinnati- Gifu relationship; and finally, the 25th anniversaries of the Monroe –Hofu (Yamaguchi Prefecture) and the Clinton Township- Yasu relationships (Shiga Prefecture). It is very clear that there are ongoing and active interactions enjoyed by the people in these sister cities both at the grassroots and municipal levels.

Today, the world's industrial structure is changing with tremendous speed. We are seeing the expansion of globalization while the uncertainty surrounding world affairs and the global economy is increasing. It is clear that US-Japan economic relations and the US-Japan alliance will become of increasing importance. For further development of US-Japan relations, grass-roots interactions/relations are key to building trust. Our consulate will continue its commitment to supporting efforts to introduce Japan through cultural events, will provide assistance to municipalities with sister city exchanges, and will also continue to promote Japanese language education at institutions in both Michigan and Ohio.

January 1st, 2018 marks the 25th anniversary of the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit. Thanks to all of your support, we have been able to reach this milestone. Each member of our consulate's staff strives to serve you and to maintain and develop good US-Japan relationship. I ask for your continued guidance and encouragement, and we would appreciate knowing any concerns or questions for us to keep improving. Please don't hesitate to contact us.

I humbly pray that 2018 will bring much happiness to you and to your family. I look forward to your continued good will in the coming year.

Mitsuhiro Wada

Consul General of Japan in Detroit