

NEWS RELEASE: Consulate-General of Japan in collaboration with Marx Layne & Company

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONSUL-GENERAL OF JAPAN IN DETROIT ATTENDS
DEDICATION OF JAPANESE GARDEN IN GRAND RAPIDS**

DETROIT, Mich. – June 12, 2015 – Kazuyuki Katayama, Ph.D., the Consul-General of Japan in Detroit (Michigan and Ohio) welcomed the Japanese Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Kenichiro Sasae and together attended the dedication for The Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden at Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids on June 10. Michigan Governor Rick Snyder and Shiga Prefecture Governor Taizo Mikazuki also attended the event, held on the eight-acre site designed by renowned Japanese landscape architect Hoichi Kurisu.

The Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is a charitable 501c3 non-profit organization that opened in 1995. The Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden is an eight-acre project that features traditional components such as waterfalls, elevation changes, extensive boulder placement, authentic Japanese structures and a functioning teahouse. The Japanese Garden, which is one of the largest in the Midwest, is located in the middle of the 158-acre main campus.

Michigan is one of the Midwestern states that enjoy particularly active exchanges with Japan in both economic and cultural fields. Japan is one of Michigan's preeminent foreign investors, with 487 Japanese facilities providing more than 38,000 direct local jobs. In addition to the Michigan-Shiga sister state-prefecture relationship, there are now 27 sister city relationships between Michigan and Japan, including Grand Rapids and Omihachiman City.

“We are honored Ambassador Sasae and our office were invited to this event, commemorating the completion of this beautiful garden. Furthermore, the in-person meeting between Governor Snyder and Governor Mikazuki of Shiga prefecture will surely contribute to strengthening their sister state-prefecture relationship in the future,” said Consul-General Katayama. “One of the many goals of the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit is to promote better understanding of Japan and Japanese culture through educational and cultural programs. The Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden showcases Japanese culture and architecture and will inspire all residents of Michigan.

“While Japanese investments in the state tend to be concentrated in metro Detroit, western Michigan holds much promise. The opening of the Japanese Garden will contribute greatly to the further growth of Japan-U.S. relations.”

The Richard & Helen DeVos Japanese Garden officially opens to the public on June 13.

About the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit

The Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit was established in 1993 by the Government of Japan to serve in the states of Michigan and Ohio. The Detroit office is one of 14 Consulates-General of Japan in the United States. The Consulate strives to promote better understanding of Japan and Japanese culture through educational and cultural programs. The office protects the interests of Japanese citizens and strengthens the Japan-U.S. alliance through furthering relations with local governments, companies, educational institutions, cultural organizations and the general public. For more information, visit <http://www.detroit.us.emb-japan.go.jp> or call (313) 567-0120.



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