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Bill Gates on Tokyo's urgent role **page 20**

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COVER PHOTO

Bill Gates at a November 9 press conference in Tokyo to announce a partnership with the Japan Sports Agency

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Plate designs by artist/
entrepreneur Rui Yamashita

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CREATIVE ACTS



Christopher Bryan Jones
chris@custom-media.com

In this issue of *The ACCJ Journal*, we explore creativity in a more obvious way than usual. Although artistic endeavors may seem superficial, those ideas that spring from the brain's right hemisphere play a critical role in business success—even when their presence may not be apparent.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I've come to appreciate this connection more and more as my career has progressed. When I was a child, I wanted to be an artist. That later gave way to a desire to make video games. Neither happened, but I never strayed from the creative path that helped me navigate a less-than-ideal childhood. Eventually, I became a musician, performing professionally for more than seven years as a bass trombonist in a symphony orchestra.

I then moved on to magazines, originally as a designer and then as a writer and editor. In all my work, I've found that the ability to take a creative approach to analytical and organizational tasks—and vice versa—has led to greater success.

CORPORATE EXAMPLE

When we think of creativity in business, certain companies such as Apple Inc., Dyson, and The Walt Disney Company come to mind. The artistic aspects of their work—whether in terms of industrial design, user experience, or entertainment value—are clear.

But the same process goes into products and solutions that seem far more practical. One that comes to mind in healthcare is a method for moving blood supplies in Africa, developed by US drone delivery startup Zipline. The company has been using drones to deliver blood for transfusions in Rwanda since 2016 and is looking to move into Tanzania. With round-the-clock service that can fulfill 500 deliveries per day and get blood anywhere within an 80-kilometer radius in less than 30 minutes—rain or shine—this creative solution to an age-

old problem is saving lives. It is also saving resources by reducing the amount of blood that goes to waste, as doctors can request only the amount they need and quickly get more if necessary.

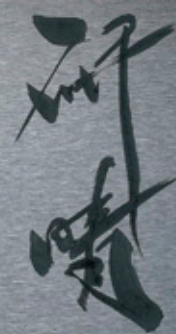
BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

This is just one example of how stepping outside the box to find a new approach can transform a business and an industry. To do so requires creativity and a willingness to try something new. I think this is becoming ever more important as the pace of technological advancement and societal shifts forces us to rethink how we do things. Whether it's addressing healthcare concerns, climate change, matters of diversity and inclusion, or any of the myriad challenges in front of us, the merging of analytical thinking and creativity puts us on the best path to a brighter future. ■

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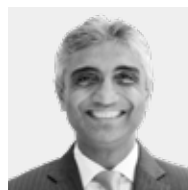
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Critical Juncture

Strengthening the ACCJ at key moment
for the United States and Japan



PRESIDENT

By Sachin N. Shah
ACCJ President

December provides an opportunity to reflect on the year that is almost behind us, and to slow down and prepare for the one ahead. While the United States and Japan continue to strengthen their bilateral relationship in the political and security realms, there is still progress to be made on the economic front. At the first bilateral trade talks between the two countries in decades—set to start early next year—the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) has a historic opportunity to play a role in the growth of commercial ties and to expand business opportunities for member companies. This will, ultimately, strengthen both countries and solidify their positions among the world's top three economies.

KEY STEPS

To seize this opportunity at a critical juncture in the US–Japan relationship, the ACCJ has made significant progress during the past 12 months in each of our strategic focus areas:

- Member centricity
- Relevant and strong advocacy
- Operational excellence

With member centricity as our foundation, the Board of Governors approved on October 16 a proposal that represents an important first step toward ensuring that the chamber is well-positioned for long-term growth. The proposal enhances the member value proposition and provides for new digital capabilities that will empower leaders, committees, and members. Through greater use of social media and video, our communications will be significantly improved and made more transparent.

We also established the F500 CEO Council and SME CEO Advisory Council to ensure that the ACCJ benefits from the experience and perspectives of those who lead our member companies. These forums better connect the bottom-up work of our committees with top-down input from our CEOs.

REINFORCED VALUE

Under the theme “Unlocking Japan’s Growth Potential,” each of our five advocacy pillars has been pursuing key reform and growth opportunities for US businesses.

For example, the Healthcare and Retirement pillar generated new ideas on how the private sector can be a partner with Japan to solve important societal challenges. By engaging F500 CEOs in this discussion, the Healthcare and Retirement pillar is developing an innovative cross-industry proposal for structural reforms in key sectors.

In addition, the Workforce Productivity pillar is working with the F500 CEOs to ensure progress following the passage of labor market reform legislation by the Diet in June.

This strategic framework positions the chamber to deliver strong and relevant advocacy to both the Japanese and US governments. Through efforts such as the Diet Doorknock, which took place November 13–21, we are able to reinforce our value to Japanese policymakers who see the ACCJ as a key resource for understanding the United States and the issues facing global business in Japan.

Thanks to the hard work of everyone, we are strengthening our foundation through our modernization program and have placed the ACCJ on a sustainable growth trajectory that focuses on member value. As the United States and Japan prepare to enter bilateral trade talks, the chamber is now better positioned to represent the interests of member companies, advance shared commercial and economic interests, and improve Japan’s overall global-business environment.

Thank you for all of your contributions. The work you do for the chamber every day—giving your knowledge and time through our forums, committees, and activities—is invaluable. You are the ACCJ! I wish you all a wonderful holiday.

Should you choose to spend some of your time or thoughts with me, please write to me at sshah@accj.or.jp ■

**The ACCJ has made significant progress during the past 12 months
in each of our strategic focus areas.**



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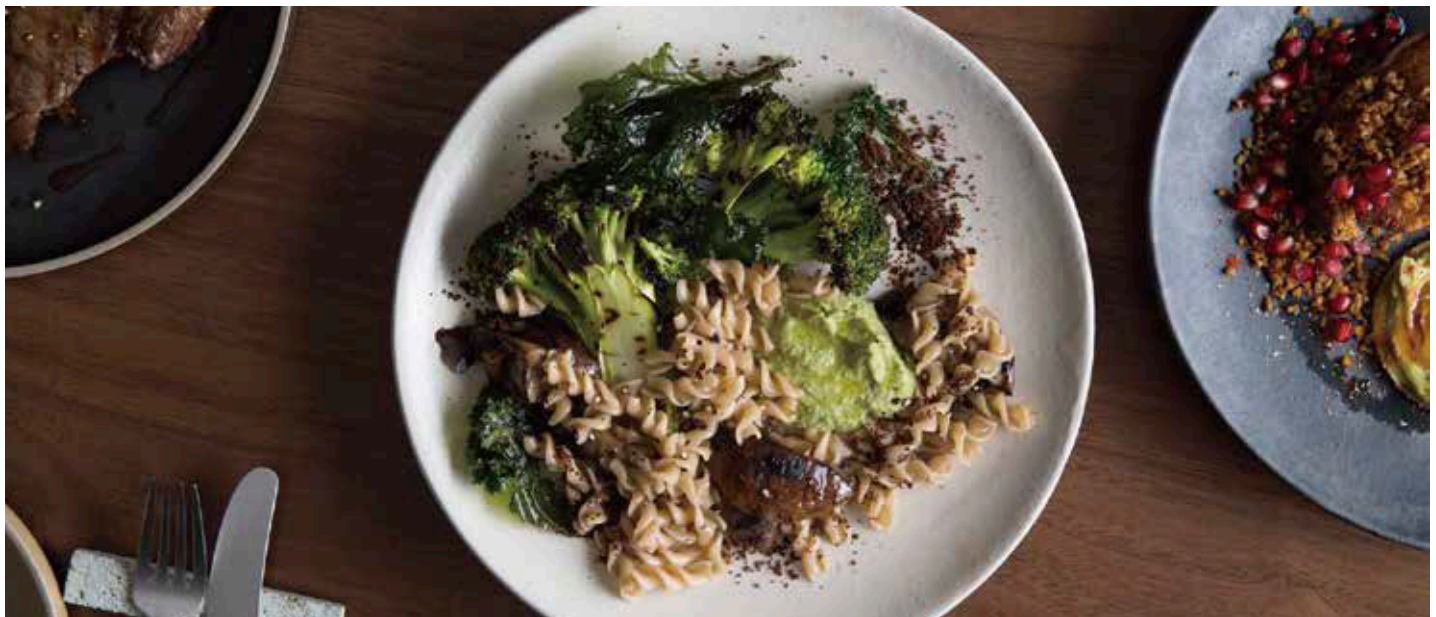
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- 1 Charity Ball Committee Chair Barbara Hancock (left) with the musical duo J.P. Mathes II and Fiddling Leona at the Charity Ball Wine Taste-Off on October 2 at The Place of Tokyo.
- 2 WisdomTree Japan CEO Jesper Koll (right) and ACCJ-Chubu Business Program Committee Chair Felix Busch at the event "Japan's New Golden Age: From Economic Recovery to Envy of the World" on November 1 at Hilton Nagoya.
- 3 ACCJ President Sachin N. Shah took part in the U.S.-Japan Council Annual Conference Business Strategy & Outlook Plenary Dialogue "Business Strategy and Market Innovation" with Suntory Holdings CEO Takeshi Niinami (right) on November 8 at the Cerulean Tower Tokyu Hotel in Shibuya.
- 4 The ACCJ-Kansai Women In Business Committee held Bella Nova Night #18, a networking event, on November 16 at Servcorp's new rental office at Honmachi Minami Garden City. The spotlight was on Mayumi Hayashi (front center), who shared her experience balancing work and childcare.
- 5 ACCJ Foreign Direct Investment Committee Vice-Chair Scott Sugino (right) presents a certificate of appreciation to Tech in Asia CEO David Corbin, who spoke at the event "The Startup Arms Race: How Japan's Tech Giants Are Staying Ahead" on November 16 at Grand Hyatt Tokyo.
- 6 From left: Tomo Honda of GR Japan K.K. and Saki Wataishi, a student in the McGill MBA Japan program, joined the festivities at the 2018 Fall Meet & Greet on November 16 at Trunk hotel.
- 7 The ACCJ-Chubu Community Service Committee announced that ¥8 million raised by the 27th ACCJ/NIS Chubu Walkathon will be donated to 21 local organizations and projects. The Fund Presentation Ceremony was held on November 7 at Nagoya International School.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit www.accj.or.jp for a complete list of upcoming ACCJ events or check our weekly e-newsletter, *The ACCJ Insider*.

• DECEMBER 8

ACCJ Charity Ball: Nashville Nights:
An Evening in Music City

• DECEMBER 11

Open Venture: How the Emerada Model and
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Marking 70

The Coriander Room at Grand Hyatt Tokyo was filled with celebratory spirit on October 16 as nearly 200 American Chamber of Commerce in Japan members and guests gathered to celebrate 70 years of rich history and look toward the ACCJ's next 70 years.

US Ambassador to Japan William F. Hagerty IV spoke about the importance of the chamber to US business in Japan, and the Honorable Akimasa Ishikawa, parliamentary vice-minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, led the *kampai*, toasting members of the ACCJ in recognition of the milestone.



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Back to the Future

Lessons learned from Lehman Shock

By Megan Casson



The financial crisis of 2007–8, triggered by the collapse of Lehman Brothers—then the fourth-largest investment bank in the United States—sent shock waves around the globe and moved governments to institute new safeguards.

A decade later, as the fallout and hardships fade, some safeguards are being weakened. One of the most prominent women in global journalism, Gillian Tett, US managing editor of *The Financial Times*, spoke about this at an October 5 luncheon at Tokyo American Club. The event was hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's Women in Business, Alternative Investment, and Taxation Committees.

Discussing her career, the global financial system, and possible future financial crises, Tett offered insights into the lessons learned from past crises and the outlook for the global financial system.

JAPAN WARNINGS

Tett was sent to Japan in 1997 to write about manufacturing and industrial companies. But, on the day of her arrival, she was asked to write about finance instead. During her four-year stay, she witnessed firsthand how the bursting of the bubble economy had impacted the country's financial system.



In 2007 . . . the Americans did more or less exactly what the Japanese had done . . . in 1996.

"As we saw the Japanese financial institutions topple over one by one, the series of panics and hard measures by the government to try and prop the system up never worked, because there was this constant tendency to sweep things under the carpet," she said.

She also recounted how, in early 2007, a friend whom she knew from her time in Tokyo a decade earlier expressed his concern that stirrings in the United States looked similar to those that had occurred in 1996 Japan.

"It was indeed the beginning of a financial crisis. What actually happened in the United States, in 2007, was that—for about a whole year—the Americans did more or less exactly what the Japanese had done."

LESSONS FORGOTTEN

Looking to the future, Tett shared three main concerns about the financial system, starting with sovereign debt. "Between 2007 and 2017, the proportion of debt to gross domestic product on a global basis actually rose quite sharply, by about 40 points. It's gone up from 179 percent to about 220. Much of that is sovereign debt."

She also discussed the world's inability to learn from past mistakes, saying, "One of the amazing facts about the post-crisis era in a global financial system is that, after we had a crisis in 2008 caused by far too much debt, you would have thought the world would say, 'You know what? Let's try and cut our debt levels.'" As demonstrated by those figures, quite the reverse has happened.

REGIONAL RISK

China is also a concern. "I can see so many parallels with Japan in the 1980s—in terms of taking a bank-centered financial system, entirely controlled by the government, and directing it towards building up the industry as fast as you can." She explained that combining this approach with a government that is slow to liberalize can result in familiar events.

However, there are a few things the Chinese could do. "What might save China is not just the fact that they do have some big reserves, but the fact that Chinese leadership seems to be very aware of these issues," she said. Hopefully, being aware of the potential threats will give China a chance to prevent a crisis—unlike what happened in the United States in the late 2000s when warning signs were ignored.

Overall, Tett believes that the biggest threat to the global financial system is insufficient cybersecurity. "If I had to make a bet about what would cause the next big shock, it really would be cyber risks or cyberattacks on the financial system." She explained that the rising tensions between world powers pose great risks of cyber incidents due to the lack of protocol about how to cope with such attacks.

UNPREDICTABLE

In closing, she shared how difficult it can be to anticipate the direction of the world, despite seeing trends. "I never thought I would be dealing with an America which is not, right now, in financial crisis, but is in many ways in political turmoil, that may prove almost as damaging." ■

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Inclusive Talent

ACCJ support for marriage equality reaches Japanese media

By C Bryan Jones

The impact of an aging society on Japan's workforce is a topic of frequent discussion and represents one of the most urgent issues facing the country. With fewer young people entering the workforce each year, Japan-based companies cannot afford to overlook anyone. And yet, in the global competition for the brightest talent, a corporate culture that is less than welcoming to LGBT couples is causing Japan to fall behind. It is time to fully embrace diversity for the betterment of businesses, the economy, and, of course, the lives and well-being of the individuals themselves.

LEVEL FIELD

There is a strong business case for inclusion, and the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) Human Resource Management Committee has released a viewpoint on the matter entitled *Support the Recruitment and Retention of Talent by Instituting Marriage Equality in Japan*.

The viewpoint outlines three key issues:

- Competitiveness
- Productivity
- Diversity and inclusion

When it comes to competing for talent, 25 countries—including all members of the Group of Seven except Japan—extend the right to marry to LGBT couples. Japan, however, has no national LGBT anti-discrimination policy and LGBT couples have no legal marital protection.

As a result, when LGBT talent assesses work offers across multiple countries, Japan is a

less attractive option. Recognizing same-sex marriage—and providing the same protections and benefits that heterosexual couples enjoy—would help level the playing field. In this way, Japan can create a more inclusive living and working environment, a critical step in stemming the rapid decline of the workforce.

BEST PRACTICE

Another benefit for Japan would be alignment with global best practice. This would allow Japanese companies doing business overseas—and global companies doing business in Japan—to apply the same standards and benefit guidelines to all their employees, regardless of sexual orientation or current country of residence.

At present, LGBT workers do not qualify for spouse visas even if their marriage is legally recognized in their home country. And health insurance? They don't qualify for that either. Some companies create special compensatory packages that work around these limitations, but such measures are administratively and financially burdensome, and may cause the recipient to incur an additional tax burden not borne by married couples.

The ACCJ considers legal recognition of marriage equality a matter of corporate social responsibility, a step that supports policies that help sustain an effective social infrastructure, promote diversity, and grow the economy. Such a move would raise

Japan's profile in the Asia-Pacific region, where the ACCJ believes Japan should take the lead in shaping future regional economic development.

LOCAL MEDIA

Japanese society is moving in the direction of freedom to marry. With more than half the population favoring the change, and with the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games soon turning the global spotlight on the country, now is the ideal time for the Government of Japan to move on this issue.

As a sign of its importance, the British, Canadian, Danish, Irish, and Australian and New Zealand chambers of commerce in Japan have joined the ACCJ to support the viewpoint, which was made possible with the help of the Lawyers for LGBT and Allies Network (LLAN).



ACCJ advocacy has also begun to reach Japanese-language media as Human Resource Management Committee Chair Ginger Griggs was featured in Nikkei's Personal Insights on November 9. In the story (above), Griggs presented an overview in Japanese of the joint-chamber marriage equality viewpoint.

Through ongoing efforts such as this, the ACCJ is dedicated to ensuring equal rights that create a better workplace and stronger environment for global business in Japan.

Download the viewpoint at www.accj.or.jp/advocacy-overview.html

JAPAN BY THE NUMBERS

7.6%

of population
self-reports
as LGBT

47%

of LGBT men
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at work

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of Japanese
support freedom
to marry



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Regulatory Science and Innovation

Recent challenges for pharmaceuticals and medical devices

By Megan Casson



Japan's Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency (PMDA) is an organization that was born in 2004 out of three entities: the Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Evaluation Center (PMDEC); the Organization of Pharmaceutical Safety and Research (OPSR); and the Japan Association for the Advancement of Medical Equipment (JAAME). Working closely with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), the PMDA aims to create a regulatory process to deliver safer, more effective medicines and medical devices. PMDA Chief Executive Officer Dr. Tatsuya Kondo shared a look at the agency's goals, recent challenges, and the future of the industry on October 18 at Tokyo American Club.

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Kondo said the PMDA has three pillars:

- Philosophy
- Regulatory Science
- International Cooperation

Supported by these pillars, the PMDA hopes to continue providing its Rational Medicine Initiative, a patient-centric system that brings a holistic approach to medicine. Based on the latest scientific knowledge, the initiative applies from the perinatal to final stages of life, Kondo explained.

SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

As a way to streamline the current system, the PMDA is promoting regulatory innovation based on regulatory science. "Regulatory innovation is important from the stage of development reviews to post marketing," Kondo said.

The PMDA has implemented many innovative regulatory initiatives, including the SAKIGAKE designation system, a conditional early approval system for pharmaceuticals, and the MID-NET—or Medical Information Database Network—project.

Most recently, the PMDA established the Regulatory Science Center, which is the hub for the agency's regulatory science. "We accumulate a lot of experiences and various initiatives based on regulatory sciences," Kondo explained. "The PMDA has centralized those experiences and established a Regulatory Science Center to promote more-efficient and stronger approaches to arising scientific issues and safety measures."

A science board was also established in 2012, and the third-term subcommittees discussed rare cancers, drug development, and artificial intelligence (AI). The Drug Development Subcommittee aims to decide on information for drug equipment. The AI Subcommittee discusses the current state, limitations, and applications of AI technology with the aim of summarizing the expected risks associated with medical devices that rely on AI. These discussions are written up and made available to the public on the PMDA website.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Three years ago, the PMDA established the *PMDA International Strategic Plan 2015*, which comprises three visions:

- Contributing to the world through regulatory innovation
- Maximizing the common health benefits to other countries and regions
- Sharing wisdom with other countries and regions

Moving forward, the agency aims to strengthen the translation, as well as the distribution and analysis of information as a way to best help society.

When it comes to international contribution, the PMDA has high expectations and is pushing to get involved in a large number of countries. An example is the PMDA Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs, set up in 2016. Providing training opportunities and on-site training, the PMDA hopes to share its regulatory knowledge and contribute to increasing regulatory level and capacity worldwide. According to Kondo, 235 regulators from 27 countries and regions participated in 2017—a 50-percent increase from the year before. If this growth continues, the general regulation of medical drugs and devices will improve globally and more patients can receive regulated healthcare.

The luncheon was hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan Healthcare Committee and its four subcommittees: Digital Health; Medical Devices and Diagnostics; and Pharmaceuticals, Regenerative Medicine and Bioscience. ■

The PMDA hopes to continue providing . . . a patient-centric system that brings a holistic approach to medicine.

Patient-Centered Health

ACCJ-UKG annual gathering explores sustainable care

By Yasuhiko Iida, Rose Tanasugarn, and Steve Iwamura



Osaka is said to be the birthplace of Japan's pharmaceutical industry. Many medical innovations have sprung from the city and healthcare remains a core industry. Today, the Kansai region as a whole continues to develop its medical infrastructure as Japan seeks answers to the healthcare challenges of tomorrow.

On October 12, the Kansai Chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) and the Union of Kansai Governments (UKG) held their annual panel discussion at the Kobe Portopia Hotel. This year's theme was "Creating a Patient-Centered Healthcare Ecosystem."

The event, which drew a crowd of more than 100 people, was organized by the ACCJ-Kansai External Affairs Committee—co-chaired by Akio (Arthur) Matsumoto, president of LS7 Corporation and Steve Iwamura, partner at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu LLC—with the help of Yasuhiko Iida, Eli Lilly Japan K.K. marketing director, who was the chief event planner and moderator. Neal Jansen, director of the Asia office of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, served as emcee.

EXPERT OPINION

To explore the issues facing Japan's healthcare system, an esteemed group of industry experts gathered. From the ACCJ, these panelists were Eli Lilly Japan President Patrik Jonsson, Bristol-Myers Squibb K.K. Executive Officer Catherine Ohura, and Dr. Hana Hayashi, Asia-Pacific director at McCann Health. They were joined by UKG panelists Kizo Hisamoto, mayor of Kobe, Seiji Hamada, vice-governor of Osaka, and Mitsubishi Tanabe Pharma Corporation Chief Digital Officer Dr. Ryo Shimizu. The event was presided over by Hyogo Governor and UKG President Toshizo Ido.

In conjunction with its bid to host the 2025 EXPO, Osaka announced in March its proposed theme: "Designing Future Society for Our Lives." Hamada explained that, central to this vision, are the aims of prolonging life expectancy and rejuvenation.

According to Shimizu, it is no longer enough for pharmaceutical companies to only manufacture drugs. They also need to become more involved with preventive care and look for ways to improve the overall patient experience during long-term treatment.

Preventive healthcare and the innovation of non-drug products and services for patients should not be overlooked.

Several world-class infrastructures already exist in Kansai, and Shimizu noted the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) as an example. One of its architects, Dr. Tasuku Honjo, is a 2018 recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, which he shared with US immunologist James P. Allison.

REDUCING RISK

Hisamoto described Kobe's efforts to lower healthcare costs through preventive measures and explained the city's goal of becoming more livable for dementia patients and their families. The city government is currently collaborating with the United Nations World Health Organization Centre for Health Development and Kobe University on a dementia study project that seeks to:

- Identify and reduce risk factors
- Discover innovative approaches for early detection
- Develop community model for effective dementia management

Hayashi believes that the creation of a new patient-centric public health policy is necessary, due to the global trend of longer lifespans and the growing need to treat chronic diseases. And Bristol Myers Squibb's Ohura added that, while drug development and innovation are critically important, preventive healthcare and the innovation of non-drug products and services for patients should not be overlooked.

Moreover, because patients, hospitals, and care providers are all customers, it is important for drug manufacturers to proactively seek consumer input and feedback.

Japan, arguably, has one of the best national healthcare systems in the world. But, as the population ages, sustainability has become an issue of increasing concern. For every retiree in Japan, there are only two workers.

ACTION STEPS

Jonsson pointed out that a strong workforce is critical to the economic sustainability of the Japanese healthcare system. He also suggested several actions that the Kansai region could take to further secure healthcare sustainability, create a more patient-centric healthcare ecosystem, and increase quality of life:

- Capitalize on the region's strengths in chemical sciences and engineering by investing in translational research (applying findings to medical practice) to create an infrastructure in which Japanese seed technologies can be developed through pre-clinical and clinical phases to become medicines for people worldwide.
- Continue to pursue primary and secondary prevention of illnesses and diseases in ways that are more patient-centric.
- Maximize efforts to develop data-digitalization technology and artificial intelligence that will benefit patients.

The panelists agreed that more stakeholders need to be involved and that they must work together. Iida concluded that coordinated efforts between the public and private sectors are necessary to develop and sustain a multidimensional framework. Only then can a patient-centered healthcare ecosystem be achieved—one that includes interpersonal support for families and social networks, organizational support for social institutions, and support for community and public policy. ■

The ACCJ and Healthcare



ACCJ-EBC Health Policy White Paper 2017: Lengthening Healthy Life Spans to Boost Economic Growth

Healthcare is a strategic investment in the single most vital resource of the nation—its people—helping them live longer, healthier, and more productive lives.

The high productivity level of the Japanese labor force is a primary source of global competitiveness for the Japanese manufacturing and services sectors, and a key reason that many foreign companies choose to invest in Japan. Faced with an aging population, attention is shifting more and more to the question of how to invest in health in a way that increases labor productivity and economic competitiveness.

In this comprehensive white paper, the ACCJ and the European Business Council in Japan (EBC) outline policy recommendations based on the belief that investing in the health of the Japanese people will not only result in a higher quality of life, but could also boost economic competitiveness by reducing worker absenteeism and disability while increasing labor productivity.



Viewpoint: Advanced Modeling and Simulation Strategies Key to Medical Countermeasures and Pandemic Planning

In this official viewpoint from the ACCJ Healthcare Committee, it is proposed that the Government of Japan (GOJ) adopt more advanced modeling and simulation strategies—including value-

focused, model-informed drug discovery and development—in the creation of medical countermeasures (MCMs) and revision of public health strategies related to pandemic planning. In doing so, the GOJ can provide maximum protection for its citizens during naturally occurring or manmade public health emergencies. Adopting such techniques would help provide a more quantitative framework in which to evaluate, develop, and cost-effectively deploy MCMs during a healthcare crisis.

These documents can be downloaded from the ACCJ website at www.accj.or.jp/advocacy-overview.html

INVEST IN HEALTH

By Bill Gates

On November 9, Microsoft Corporation co-founder Bill Gates spoke to the National Diet of Japan about the work of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Japan's long history of leadership in global health, and why the country is so important to the efforts of the foundation to eradicate disease worldwide. Following is the full text of that speech.



PHOTO: ALESSANDRO DI CIOMMO/NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

Thank you, all, very much.

It's great to be back in Japan. When I was working at Microsoft, I visited Japan more than any other country. We chose this as the location for Microsoft's first office outside of the United States, and there were some years when we did more business here than we did in the United States.

So, I recognize that this is how many of you may know me—through my work at Microsoft.

But for the past decade, I've spent most of my time focusing on the work of our foundation—and the fight against global poverty and disease. I'm grateful to have the chance to share with you why I became involved in this effort—and why Japan's support is so important.

I had never even heard of rotavirus. And I thought, "How could something I'd never heard of be killing half a million children every year?"

I read further and learned that millions of children were dying from diseases that had essentially been eliminated in countries like Japan and the United States.

My wife, Melinda, and I always thought that one day we'd start second careers in philanthropy. But the scale of the global health crisis motivated us to act. We established our foundation in 2000, and a few years later, I left Microsoft to focus on philanthropy full time.

The question Melinda and I kept asking was: How could we do this most effectively?

We wanted to make sure that every dollar we invested was doing as much good as possible.

In 2000, we helped finance the creation of an innovative alliance called Gavi. Gavi's goal was simple: to reach more children in developing countries with vaccines, which would protect them against diseases like rotavirus.

What I like about Gavi is that it focuses on getting maximum return on investment. Gavi pools the demand for vaccines from the world's poorest countries. Then it works with pharmaceutical companies, developed countries like Japan, and foundations like ours to buy millions of doses at lower cost.

Gavi immunizes 100 million children a year in this way. In the lowest income countries, every dollar invested in those vaccines saves \$16 in healthcare costs and lost wages. And when you consider the broader economic impact of people living longer and healthier lives, vaccines return \$44 for every dollar invested.

That's a lot of money that developing countries can invest, instead, in health clinics, education, and better nutrition for kids. Things that help people lift themselves out of poverty and reduce their need for aid later on.

Gavi helped spark a new era in development aid, one focused on giving efficiently and effectively.

In fact, the same year as Gavi's founding, the G8 met in Okinawa and began a coordinated effort to fight malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV. These diseases are the greatest killers in low-income countries. And with Japan's leadership, the G8 established another innovative organization called the Global Fund to purchase and deploy essential medicines and solutions for these diseases.

So, if there was ever a time when we need Japan to do more to support global health, it is now.

Of course, Japan has a long history of leadership in global health. A Japanese virologist led the World Health Organization's effort against smallpox when the disease was finally eradicated. And today, Prime Minister Abe is one of the world's strongest advocates for universal health coverage.

But Japan's support of the Global Fund is certainly one of its most important contributions to global health. Because it's extremely effective at saving lives.

FIND CURES

Every \$100 million Japan invests in the Global Fund saves more than 130,000 lives. So, your three-year commitment of \$800 million will save the lives of more than one million people. That's an incredible return on investment.

There are other diseases of poverty where Japan has also made a big impact.

Consider polio. Thirty years ago, there were 350,000 new polio cases every year. Last year, it was just 22 cases. (Not 22,000 or 2,200. But 22).

Japan has helped in this effort because the Japan International Cooperation Agency has provided significant loans to help reach more children with vaccines that protect them against polio.

My point is this: These kinds of smart investments—to provide vaccines and to fight diseases like polio, HIV, and malaria—have fundamentally improved global health.

The whole story can be told with one statistic: The number of children who live to see their fifth birthday. It's the best indicator of a society's overall well-being. That's because almost all advances in society—better health, education, economic growth—show up as reductions in the childhood mortality chart.

Which is why the following numbers are crucial:

In 1990, 11 million children under the age of five died, mostly from preventable diseases.

In 2016, the number was five million.

That's still a big number, but it's a decrease of more than 50 percent in a single generation, even though the world population has increased by almost half in that time.

I wish more people—here in Japan and in other countries—were aware of this progress and of Japan's contribution to it.

Investing in global health produce outsizes returns and makes a huge difference in the lives of millions of people. Often, it's the difference between life and death.

I'm here today because I believe we need to keep up these efforts. Your investments matter more than ever because continued progress is not inevitable.

In just the last few months, we've witnessed a new outbreak of the Ebola virus.

In some low-income countries, there have been increases in malaria cases.

The largest generation in Africa's history is at an age when they're more susceptible to HIV than at any other time.

And the number of people living in extreme poverty might be on the rise again, too. That's because the poorest countries in the world, mostly in Africa, are experiencing much faster population growth than the rest of the world.

One way to combat the threat of rising poverty and disease is by developing innovative new tools, and Japan is lending its R&D muscle to this effort with the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund. Over the past six years, it has established

some successful partnerships, including one with Fujifilm that developed a breakthrough diagnostic tool for TB that works especially well for remote areas.

But we also need Japan's continued support for other effective initiatives like Gavi and the Global Fund. Over the next few years, we'll need to ensure they have enough funding to continue doing such a great job. The same is true for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative—and a newer health initiative called the Global Financing Facility, which helps coordinate countries' investments in women's and children's health.

So, if there was ever a time when we need Japan to do more to support global health, it is now.

Japan's contributions to the fight against poverty and disease have made a difference. Yet, today only a small fraction of the total development aid Japan gives—about five percent a year—is devoted to global health. In the United States, 28 percent of development aid is invested in global health.

I understand that it might seem difficult to set aside more funding for other nations when there are deserving programs here at home. But it's important to remember that investments in global health are investments in Japan, too.

Strengthening the healthcare systems of developing nations helps protect Japan and other countries against the spread of new diseases and future pandemics.

HEALTH AND SECURITY

Investments in global health are also investments in Japan's security because helping people lift themselves out of poverty addresses some of the root causes of mass migration and civil unrest in some of the world's most difficult places.

And investments in global health contribute to Japan's economy because they help expand international markets. Economic models show that development aid could increase Africa's GDP by up to 90 percent over the next 30 years.

Indeed, global health is somewhat similar to business: there is a high return if you invest in innovation and get the strategy right.

Although Melinda and I have been fortunate thanks to the success of Microsoft, we still care about every penny we invest because we believe every person deserves the opportunity to live a healthy and productive life.

I hope you will consider the benefits to Japan of investing more in the fight against poverty and disease.

The future of millions of people around the world depends on it. And the actions you take as members of the parliament also affect people here in Japan.

Thank you, and I'm looking forward to our conversation. ■



ROBOT TAX

Bill Gates predicts how humans will stay employed

By Keiichi Murayama and Hiromi Sato

NIKKEI
ASIAN REVIEW

Microsoft Corporation founder and philanthropist Bill Gates predicts that, as artificial intelligence and other technologies flourish, societies will use taxes to ensure there is still a place for humans in the workforce.

“It is quite amazing, the progress the world has made during the last, I would say, 28 years,” in tackling medical and poverty problems, Gates said in a wide-ranging interview with *Nikkei* as he emphasized the importance of global cooperation to resolve issues such as climate change.

He also stressed that nurturing software talent is important for Japan to remain competitive.

Microsoft has long been a leader of the global tech industry, accounting for a high share of the computer operating system market. Microsoft’s overwhelming strength inspired rivals, including Apple Inc. and Google LLC, and helped lay the groundwork for today’s digital society.

Even now, 10 years after he left a full-time role at the company and shifted his attention to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, he remains an avid follower of technology.

“Technology has taken us from all being subsistence farmers, where—when the weather was bad—we would be malnourished, and our average life span was very short,” Gates said. “So yes, I think that the human condition today, where people learn how to read, and they live into their seventies or eighties, has greatly improved.”

As artificial intelligence and other technologies flourish, societies will use taxes to ensure there is still a place for humans in the workforce.





Junko Chihira, an android receptionist, assists visitors to Aqua City in Odaiba.

TECHNICAL TROUBLE

Gates noted that technology has enabled people to lead longer and more cultured lives. Yet tech can also be disruptive. One big fear is that automation will steal more and more human jobs.

“All these technologies bring problems as well as solutions,” Gates said. “Electrification is, of course, a miraculous thing. [But] the coal plants are emitting pollution; the nuclear plants . . . people are worried about safety; the automobile . . . we have crashes. [With] every new technology, whether it is social media or robotics, people are worrying. ‘Okay, what about the negative effects?’”

Gates said that the concerns are understandable, and that it is more important than ever to come up with ideas on how to use technology effectively.

“With the idea that robots will help us make more goods and services with less people, we have defined the job as not the only thing that we were born to do,” he said. “If we have to work less, then yes, it is a question of how we should spend that time. But with that freedom, humans will find ways to create meaning.”

Although the business environment is changing dramatically, he said: “I am certainly not saying that we should artificially slow down the move toward automation. And robotics is just a form of what we have been doing to date.”

Gates does not think robots will kick humans out of offices. “The basic idea in taxation is that you can tax capital, or you can tax labor—and a robot is a capital good. And right now, there are a lot of taxes on labor, like payroll taxes. Over time, because we as humans want to encourage jobs and job creation, instead of having these positive taxes on labor we will actually, probably, have negative taxes . . . subsidization to bolster labor demand.

“We will shift, and we will have much, much higher taxes on capital. So, when I talk about a robot tax, I am talking about a basic shift of the form of taxation that we have. Property tax, capital gains tax. Society will want to shift and that will mean that it will be like a robot tax.”

Explaining how this would work, he continued: “If you choose to buy a robot instead of employing humans, that is okay. You can do that. But, the tax system will be pushing you to at least consider using humans more, unlike today’s tax system, which actually pushes in the opposite direction.”

Some experts point out that social media could make people think too narrowly and result in divisions in society.

“The younger generation is going to be very important, because they shape things like social media and what is the good impact of social media.”

DIFFERENCE MAKER

Gates said he feels that his foundation’s activities are beginning to bear fruit. “The metric of greatest importance in global health—and one that we track closely—is the number of children dying who are under the age of five. Back in 1990, that was over 12 million a year. Now it is less than six million a year,” he said, crediting the development of drugs and improvements to supply systems.

The percentage of people who live in extreme poverty—living on less than \$1.90 a day—declined from 36 percent to 9 percent of the world’s population. “The human condition is improving and—even if we talk about inequalities—the poorest countries, including India and China, have been growing their economies faster than the rich countries, including Japan and the United States. So, actually, the world is more equitable today,” he said.

Gates sees Africa as problematic. “The portion of extreme poverty that is in Africa will be very, very high, about 90 percent by midcentury. The only way to really keep those numbers going down is to work with Africa so they invest in health and education even more than has been achieved to date,” he said, stressing that investment in education, among other areas, will be more necessary than ever. “We have to cut the costs down very dramatically,” to ensure everyone will benefit from innovation, such as pharmaceuticals, he said.

The activities of the foundation, much like those of Microsoft, extend across national boundaries; but Trump’s policies run counter to that approach. “We are in an atmosphere that is a little negative about globalization and relationships with other countries,” Gates said, adding that the United States should continue to play a role as an aid donor, because stability in poor countries is beneficial for the United States.

As aid recipients become more independent, they will help boost the global economy. “Even South Korea was an aid recipient. India was a big aid recipient. Now, of course, South Korea is a significant donor,” Gates said.

“I certainly believe there are a lot of issues—like climate change or stopping disease—where, if the world works together, that is really the only way to solve those problems,” he said. “Then, I also

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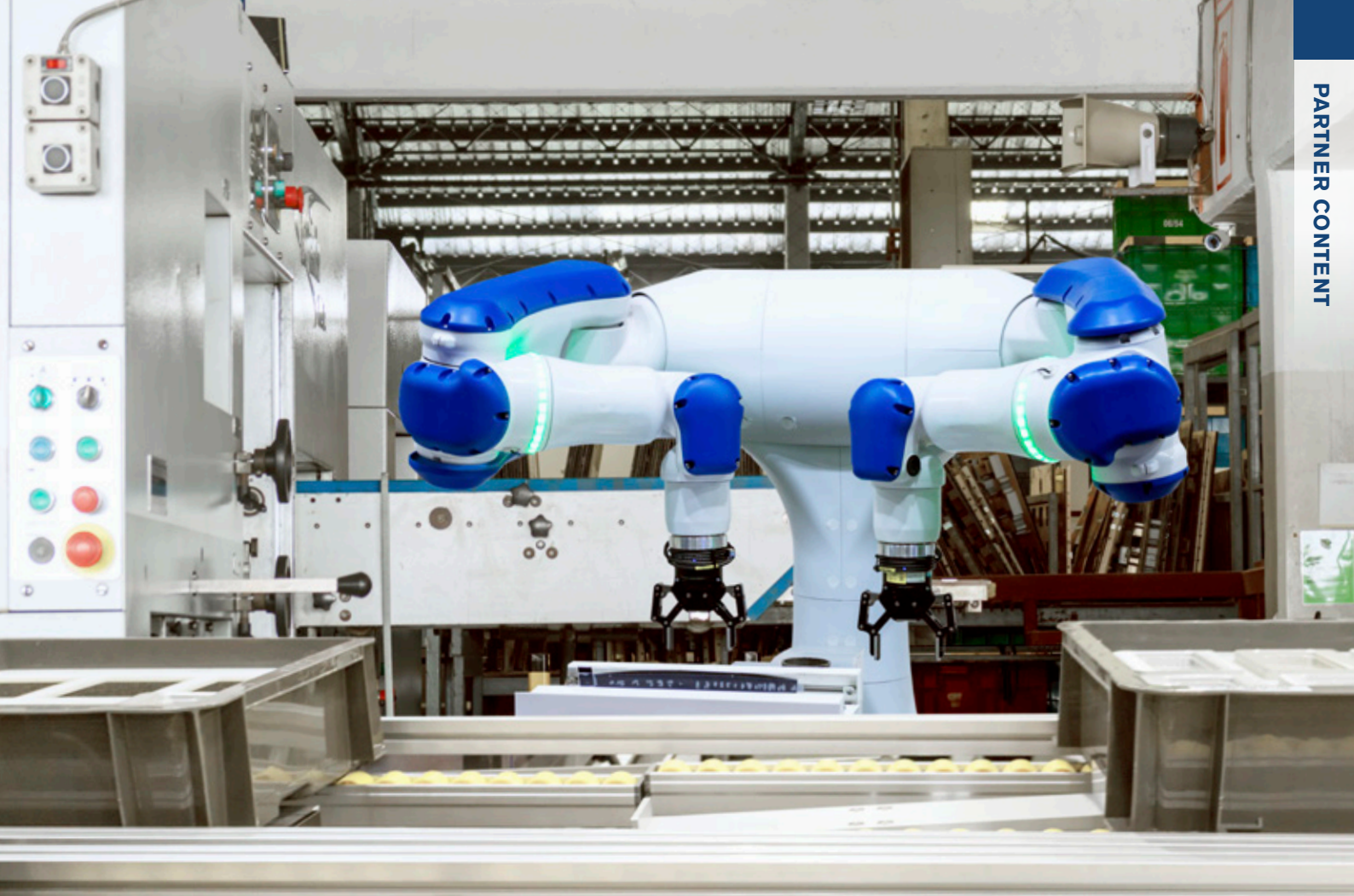


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believe in trade, where the world economy does much better if we have more trade.”

CATCHING UP

Japan pales as a leader of innovation compared with booming China and the United States, home to Google, Facebook, Inc., Apple, and Amazon.com, Inc.

“Science and engineering are where a lot of this change in innovation is coming from,” Gates said. “Japan has always had a lot of engineers and companies that think about engineering, so that’s very helpful.

“But, now, they have to adapt to the new software-based, AI-based technology. Hopefully, the education system is feeding really well-trained people into those companies to help them stay globally competitive, like Toyota Motor is.”

Gates said he hopes to see a strengthening of cooperation between his foundation and Japan.

“Japan has a lot of expertise in Asia, and we are trying to eliminate malaria in Southeast Asia as part of the first step of the overall multidecade global eradication program,” he said.

“There are certainly the government resources, there are certainly the private companies—including the pharmaceutical companies. Japanese pharmaceutical company Eisai is one of the companies that donate medicine for neglected diseases.” ■

Bill Gates, 63, founded Microsoft with friend Paul Allen in 1975 after dropping out of Harvard University. He built his enormous fortune by nurturing software, which had only been an accessory to hardware, into a massive business.

In 2000, he and his wife Melinda established the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has about 1,500 staff tackling medical, poverty, and educational issues.



PHOTO: KJETIL REE / CC BY-SA 3.0

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REGIONAL DRAW

Roads less traveled
lead to economic boost

By John Amari



When you mention Shikoku in casual conversation, there's a good chance the person you're talking to has heard of it, yet has never visited the area themselves, even if they are Japanese.

Shikoku clearly has more to offer than just stunning nature, delectable food, and illustrious culture. And this makes one wonder: How successful has the region—and others like it—been in their efforts to attract new visitors? Is there more that can be done?

To find out, *The ACCJ Journal* spoke to industry insiders and enthusiasts, including members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) Tourism Industry Committee.

For Co-Chair Steve Dewire, who is general manager at the Grand Hyatt Tokyo, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be a focal point for many of Japan's regions, allowing them to position themselves as viable alternative destinations to major cities such as Tokyo.

"I believe that different regions are sincerely focused on expanding their draw for tourism. This can be well targeted to return guests who have explored the country's major sites

and locations. Their subsequent visits are to experience local culture and tradition in a more intimate fashion," Dewire said.

Sanae Sekiya, co-chair of the Tourism Industry Committee and a partner at consulting company Tri-Star LLC, agrees. "Shikoku has an advantage in terms of beauty in nature, sports activities, such as cycling, canoeing, and fishing, and, of course, food."

That said, Dewire acknowledged that the regions must make long-term, strategic decisions to ensure that they do not promise more than they can deliver.

REGIONAL RENOVATION

"Many regions may not have the full supporting infrastructure, but their hope is to move in this direction as tourism grows," Dewire said. "Regions can expand their participation in national and international tourism events and partnerships with more established cities and sites nearby. Building suitable infrastructure takes time, support, and an effective short term and long-term plan."

Sekiya agrees: "A key factor going forward will be improvements to public transportation. Convenient applications on mobile phones will also be important as they make it easier to survive in a foreign country."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KOTOHIRA BUS CO., LTD. GROUP, NANO YODA HOTEL IYAONSEN, AND 24 EYES MOVIE STUDIO.

Other features that will help are developing a modern infrastructure and increasing the variety of activities on offer to include not only traditional ones, such as workshops that teach local crafts, but also modern ones, such as whitewater rafting along the Yoshino River.

“In addition to enjoying food, culture, art, temples, shrines, and scenery that are not familiar, visitors can have an enhanced experience in Japan if there are more options for things to do and experience in local places,” Sekiya said.

SEEING FIRSTHAND

To find out what this would be like, *The ACCJ Journal* was among a group of foreign media invited in November for a three-day tour of Shikoku, in particular the Iya Valley region, Takamatsu City, and Shodoshima City.

A pleasant surprise for the group was that Shikoku revealed itself not just to be a proverbial diamond in the rough, but also a region that's ideal for modern travelers.

The Iya Valley is simply stunning. To describe the scene from the many roadside viewing spots that zig-zag through the area as dramatic is an understatement.

The smallest of Japan's main islands, Shikoku has, in recent years, sought to enhance its profile on the global stage. And that effort is beginning to pay off.

Tourism in the region is increasing, fueled largely by visitors from China, South Korea, and Southeast Asia.

Domestic and Western tourists are

also beating a path to the isle.

One thing helping draw such a diverse group of travelers is the variety of means by which one can reach the island—low-cost domestic and regional carriers, ferries, and trains being the most popular.

Once there, visitors can enjoy even more travel options, including car, motorcycle, and power-assisted bicycle rentals. Tour buses, boat cruises, and even cable cars are also popular, and hotels often provide shuttle bus service to and from the airport.

Indeed, the region is going out of its way to modernize its infrastructure by refurbishing traditional inns, offering online and offline materials in English, and ensuring access to fast and reliable Wi-Fi. Affordable business hotels are also available.



And that's quite apart from a stunning natural endowment, unimpeachable hospitality, and a reputable culture. Local cuisine, such as *udon* in Kagawa, sea bream rice in Ehime, and ramen in Tokushima are a hit with visitors.

HIDDEN SPLENDOR

Our first destination was the vertiginous Iya Valley, which was named by New York-based *Travel + Leisure* magazine as one of the "50 Travel Locations to Visit in 2018," the only Japanese destination to make the list.

One reason for the growing interest is that the valley has a reputation as one of Japan's three most-secluded regions.

In the past, access to the area was limited due to its remoteness, and only the most determined made it there. Warring samurai sought refuge in Iya during the Gempei War (1180–1185), for instance.

But that is changing, and we made our way to the valley courtesy of the Kotobus Group, a local tour bus operator, having arrived earlier in the day on an All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd. flight from Haneda Airport in Tokyo to Takamatsu Airport in Shikoku, a journey of just over an hour.

The Iya Valley is simply stunning. To describe the scene from the many roadside viewing spots that zig-zag the area as dramatic is an understatement.

We took a break at Hi-no-Ji bend, a viewing spot carved out by the Iya River that resembles the V-shaped *ひ* (*hi*) character of the *hiragana* script used for writing Japanese.

Each side of the valley, which stretches out in a 20-kilometer gorge around Mt. Tsurugi, rises several hundred feet into the heavens and stands covered in foliage. At the time of our visit, it was about to be overwhelmed by the fall tints of crimson and vermilion.

It's little wonder that Mt. Tsurugi is known for its panoramic views and spring water—both highly sought by lovers of hiking, an activity that locals recommend.

A favorite for visitors to the valley is the mischievous Peeing Boy Statue, a monument of a child standing on the edge of a 200-meter precipice that is a symbol of innocence and courage.

WORLD'S EDGE

It's hardly surprising that a region that enjoys outstanding natural assets should also offer some of the country's most sumptuous local fare.

Iya Valley is famous for buckwheat, the ingredient used to make *soba* noodles. These, along with the local *konnyaku* (a kind of yam), *iwa-dofu* (hardened tofu), and *goshi-imo* (potatoes), are but a sampling of the region's wholesome and savory food.

Visitors to the area would be negligent were they not to have lunch at the nearby Nanoyado Hotel Iyaonsen, a seamless combination of tradition and modernity.

The hotel's perch on the edge of a gorge offers some of the most life-affirming views in Iya. Just before lunch, we had a quick tour of the hotel's well-appointed rooms, which are complemented by jaw-dropping views of the gorge.

But it's the tastes that really stir the heart, and we began our meal with the locally caught river trout, helped along by a chilled glass of sparkling rosé.

Then, the delicate offerings of sushi, *sashimi*, and tofu, followed up with the famed Iya *soba* and a side of *tempura*

with steamed vegetables and beef, helped banish any pangs of hunger brought on by the morning's activities.

When the frozen vanilla sherbet dessert arrived, it was merely icing on the cake—and a perfect one at that.

VISTA

Nanoyado Hotel Iyaonsen would have been a splendid option for a place to lay down for the night, but we were equally impressed with our choice: a traditional Japanese *minka* (inn) located in Togenkyo-Iya Mountain Village.

Originally dwellings for farmers, merchants, and artisans, *minka*—in their repurposed form—have emerged as the perfect option for visitors wishing to enjoy a sense of tradition but with modern comforts.

The refurbished farmhouses in Togenkyo-Iya meet these criteria and form a network of inns managed by the Chiiori Trust, a non-profit organization dedicated to sustainable tourism promotion.

One 300-year-old thatched farmhouse in the area was purchased by US writer and Japan expert Alex Kerr, author of *Lost Japan*. He named it Chiiri, meaning House of the Flute.

In our *minka*, we were greeted by a local and were offered a multi-course dinner made from fresh, locally sourced mountain ingredients. The chef, too, was a local woman who made our meal as we settled in.

Waking up to a village wreathed in morning fog—with a symphony of nature's sounds playing in the valley below—it was not hard to imagine how farmers and warriors of yesteryear lived out their lives in these very mountains.

Over the next two days, our group visited a village with more scarecrows than people—hence its name, Tenku-no-mura or Scarecrow Village—as well as Kazurabashi Bridge, where members of the Genji and Heike clans battled during the Gempei War, and Choshikei Monkey Park, an open-air space filled with roaming monkeys.

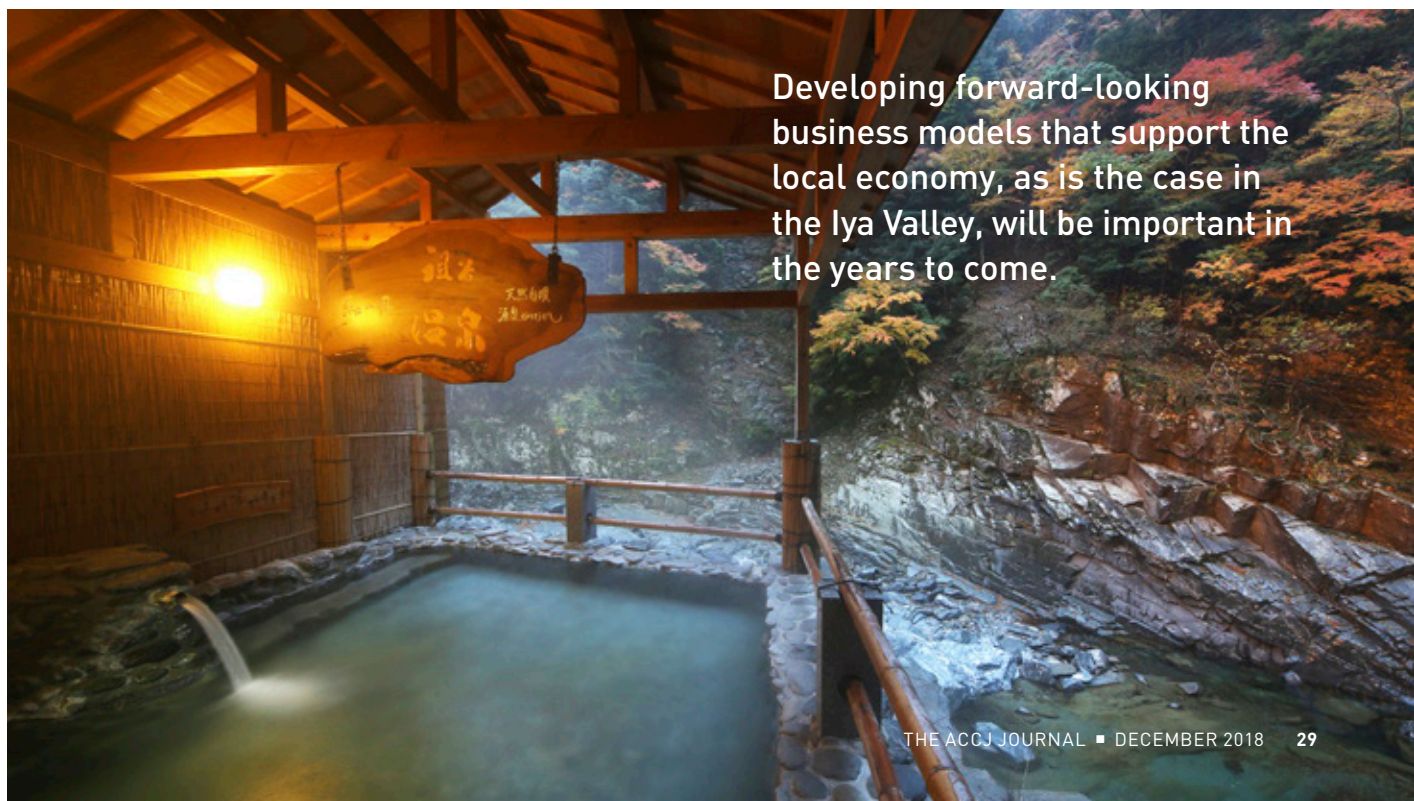
We also enjoyed a hair-raising zip-line experience at Iya Fureai Park and a relaxing cruise aboard the Oboke Ravine Pleasure Boat, to name but a handful of activities.



INBOUND INTENT

One thing is clear: developing forward-looking business models that support the local economy, as in the Iya Valley, will be important in the years to come.

Indeed, the repurposed *minka* model has as a goal providing new revenue streams for largely depopulated traditional communities. This will give them access to the modern economy while maintaining elements of their traditional lifestyle. Shikoku, in this regard, appears to be ahead of the game. ■



Developing forward-looking business models that support the local economy, as is the case in the Iya Valley, will be important in the years to come.

BORN FREE

Ex-returnee Rui Yamashita and
the raw art of entrepreneurship

By John Amari



“I’ve travelled and lived in many countries, but I honestly feel that Kenya is a place where people are generally positive and happy—even if some don’t have much.”

When Rui Yamashita speaks about her adopted home in East Africa, she does so with a passion that’s immediate, authentic, and infectious.

A Japan-born graphic designer and artist, Yamashita is the founder of Kangarui, a Nairobi-based design and fashion company inspired by the beauty of Kenya and its people.

Her voice bursting with enthusiasm, Yamashita told *The ACCJ Journal* that she wants her work to go beyond mere utility. She hopes to embed it deep within the hearts of her customers, reminding them of their origin.

“Kenya is full of very rich hearts, and I want to spread that. I want people to eat with my art, carry my art, or wear it so that they can feel that happiness as well.”



From household wares to clothing, bags, and accessories, Yamashita's creations are sold in East Africa and the United States, as well as the Middle East and Asia. In Japan, her creations have appeared in pop-up shops at Seibu Department Store's Shibuya location and Daimaru Department Store in Osaka.

ROOTS OF PASSION

Born in Kochi City on the island of Shikoku, Yamashita spent her childhood in Thailand, Kenya, and Indonesia due to her father's work as an engineer.

When she was four, the family settled in Nakuru, the fourth-largest city in Kenya, located near Lake Nakuru National Park.

"It was normal for me to go to the bush," she remembers, looking back on a rather idyllic childhood.

"I didn't grow up with lions in our garden, but we did have monkeys and chameleons, and access to the national park."

Waking up, she would peer into the mid distance and see the lake covered with pink flamingos, which would gather there every day to drink and dine.

On other occasions, the Yamashita family would enjoy barbecues, camping, or safaris in the area.

“Oh, the horizon! And the beautiful blue sky! And the endless grassland in front of you! I feel that it could change people’s lives if they see that once.”

Joining the dots is easy with the benefit of hindsight, but it's hard not to imagine that the roots of Yamashita's passion for design—and the seeds of her blossoming career—were planted there on Lake Nakuru's shores.



Even with her collection of designs in hand, she never thought that this would become a business.





THIRD-CULTURE KID

Yamashita attended the private Braeburn High School in Nairobi and International School Kenya—the latter having been founded through a collaboration between the governments of Canada and the United States.

But even in childhood, she already showed signs of creativity and a passion for transcending cultural barriers.

“I’ve always been creative—I had my own origami class in school, for example—and that’s why I chose to study art and design in university.”

So, when she relocated to England for college, Yamashita had every intention of following a creative path.

And yet, she wasn’t sure exactly where her passion lay. Was it fashion? Design? Art? To find out, she took an art and design foundation course in London.

“But when I first tried fashion, I realized that I couldn’t stitch to save my life, and I didn’t care much for drawing people.”

ON THE ROAD

If not fashion, then what? At first, graphic design proved to be a challenge, too, “because you’re always in front of a computer and sat in one place.”

This was a hard field to plow for someone who, as a child, had run free on the plains of Nakuru.

However, when she did sit down and try her hand at graphic design, a strange thing happened. “My teachers often complimented my work, so I realized that it may actually be what I’m best at.”

After her foundation course, Yamashita enrolled in the graphic design program at Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom.

When she graduated and returned to Japan for work, she was in for a shock—after all, she hadn’t lived here since shortly after her birth.

“I was around 22 years old when I came back to Japan. But, as I didn’t grow up there, I really knew nothing of the life there and what to expect.”

So, it came as no surprise that, after working in a variety of design-related roles in Tokyo, she found herself back on the road—this time to Germany.



FROM HOBBY TO BUSINESS

Working mostly from home as a graphic designer in Germany, Yamashita's interests led her to try user interface design, a fortuitous path that introduced her to digital art.

Inspired by digital art emanating from the United States, she soon began creating her own variations of the form.

"When I had a collection of such work, I realized that they were all connected to Kenya," she remembers.

Not only were her creations related to East Africa's wildlife, they were also filled with dynamic colors that harked back to her globetrotting childhood—particularly those years spent in Kenya.

"I thought: This is a sign. I must be missing Kenya so much."

Even with her collection of designs in hand, she never thought that this would become a business.

However, there was a website in the United States that allowed users to upload images and have them printed on cushions. "So that's what I did." At first, Yamashita made cushions to furnish her new home in Germany.

It was not until her friends started to request—and pay for—similar creations that she thought of turning her passion into a business. Thus was born Kangarui—a combination of her first name and a Kenyan fabric (*kanga*), as well as the Swahili word for guinea fowl (*kanga*), her favorite bird.

The colors, she says, reflect the rich positive hearts of the people of East Africa.

Whether pillows with vibrant flowers, dishes sporting a speckled guinea fowl, or a tote-bag design inspired by local fabric, Yamashita's creations have an uplifting effect—or so her customers tell her.

FINDING HER VOICE

This is not to say that her entrepreneurial journey has been a road lined with roses; it has not. As far back as her first, post-graduation foray into the world of work, Yamashita believes she has always had to prove herself to naysayers and doubters.

In Kenya, Yamashita initially felt she was not taken seriously because of her age and relative inexperience—and being a

Even in childhood, she already showed signs of creativity and a passion for transcending cultural barriers.

woman entrepreneur—especially by industry insiders, such as suppliers and manufacturers.

In her first professional position, she worked as a designer for a public relations company. The challenge there was to navigate

Japan's corporate world—a place notorious for being a cultural minefield, especially for returnees such as her who are not versed in the way things are done.

Even today, she confesses, she still triggers the occasional cultural mine in Japan.

Despite the challenges, which have included expanding her business from its initial business-to-consumer model to include a business-to-business strategy, Yamashita is finding her feet and entering new markets. Her customers include major home-design retailers, hoteliers, souvenir stores, friends, and family.

Interestingly, it's not just the wildlife and nature of East Africa that have spurred her entrepreneurial spirit.

"In Kenya, I meet so many powerful women who are very open about their success. They are strong and live independently and are so happy. They push really hard to do the things that they love; and they are all around me. It's very inspirational." ■





AFTER THE THAW, YUKI HASEGAWA

ARTISTIC VISION

**CWAJ marks 62 years
of inspiration and support**

By Megan Casson

The College Women's Association of Japan (CWAJ) is a non-profit organization staffed entirely by volunteers who provide a variety of support for many causes. The CWAJ Print Show, first held in 1956, is a globally recognized exhibition that features prints from established artists as well as up-and-coming talent and is the CWAJ's biggest fundraiser. All money raised goes to scholarship programs, and some of the world's most prestigious print artists have been featured—and indeed discovered—through this annual event. As the 62nd exhibition got underway, *The ACCJ Journal* spoke with organizers and artists to find out how and why the show has not only endured, but grown stronger over the past six decades.

THE OPENING

In 1949, Japanese Fulbright students were having difficulty raising sufficient funds to travel to the United States. At the time, Japanese prints were very popular among Americans, so the CWAJ began selling the prints with the aim of using the proceeds to pay the students' airfare. From that, the group's volunteer movement was born.

This led to the CWAJ Print Show, and today more than 700 works are submitted each year, and a jury selects just over 200 prints to be displayed at the exhibition. On October 30, the CWAJ kicked off the 62nd Print Show at a special event at Hillside Forum in Daikanyama, Tokyo. Open to the public, the space provides a vibrant setting for the display of diverse works, all of which were organized, curated, and hung by CWAJ members.

The 2018 Associate Show also opened at Hillside Forum alongside the Print Show. The Associate Show always has a running theme, and this year's was cover artists. Previous



OH MY MAI, KUNIO KANEKO

Print Show catalog cover artists were contacted and, if they were still creating work, asked to submit a piece. The print is displayed alongside the artist's original cover and offers viewers a glimpse of the evolution of the artist's work. This is a great way to demonstrate the long history of the CWAJ and how the annual show continues to keep up with the landscape of the modern art world.

US ARTISTS

With 200 pieces on display, the range of art techniques is vast. One is traditional Japanese woodblock printing that has been practiced for more than four centuries and represents some of the most iconic pieces of art to come out of Japan.

"Woodblock prints are actually quite primitive," explained Kyoto-based US print artist Daniel Kelly, who is featured in this year's Associate Show. "There are no machines. I spend weeks just making trial proofs; and that is after the woodcarving is done. For a complete edition, the whole process—from shaping and sizing the paper to signing the edition—usually takes 4 to 6 months." This lengthy process adds to the sensitive and delicate outcome, with the work being printed on *washi*, a type of Japanese paper made from tough fibers that is registered as a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage.

Kelly has been a prominent and consistent contributor to the CWAJ Print Show.

"This year, the size limit was made smaller by the committee. I did notice that, but made my usual large-as-possible print. This is the first year my work is not in the Print Show in about 30 years," Kelly explained.

His first entry to appear in the show, *Rolling In* (1982), was a knockout seller. That was the encouragement the Idaho-native needed to take the plunge and to go forth as a full-time working artist "against all of the advice of older

The renowned exhibition is a great platform from which young talent can propel themselves into the art world.



WAY HOME II, SOHEE KIM

relatives who were not artists." As Kelly explained: "I often heard that it might be good to study accounting. Now that makes me laugh."

Washi paperworks are also popular and are a specialty of Rochester, NY-native Sarah Brayer. She has been a prominent figure in the CWAJ Print Shows and was the first non-Japanese woman to be featured on the catalog cover, in 2007. In addition to *washi* paperworks, she is known for aquatint, a technique that involves etching a copper plate to create shading that resembles watercolor. Her works have been featured in the collections of the British Museum in

London, the Smithsonian Institution's Sackler Gallery in Washington, DC, the New York Public Library, and the Embassy of the United States, Tokyo.

OPENING DOORS

To break in to the art world and become a self-sustaining working artist is no mean feat. The renowned exhibition is a great

platform from which young talent can propel themselves into the art world. To help make these dreams come true, the CWAJ presents the ¥500,000 Young Print Maker Award to selected artists each year. The winners then exhibit in the show three years later. This encourages the pursuit of art by providing talented young artists with opportunity and support.

It is in this area, in particular, that Kelly holds The CWAJ Print Show in high regard. "It is a huge lift for young artists, and for that I thank the CWAJ." The continuity and annual presence, he says, is what makes the print show so special.

"In the world of Japanese print, the CWAJ is an institution," he added. "It is an educational venture for the public and a



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CWAJ member guides a visually impaired guest through the braille print.

support system for artists.” The show has featured so many young, aspiring artists, and is also a warm home for many well-established artists in Japan and abroad.

HANDS ON

The CWAJ has done many things to help the visually impaired in Japan over the years. Hands-on Art is a special collection made in collaboration with the Japan Braille Library. CWAJ members create braille versions of a selection of works in the Print Show to offer visually impaired guests an opportunity to experience the art. The guest can take in the scene by feeling raised images and patterns while a guide talks with them about the print and the original artist’s creative ideas.

Fumiko Ishii, a CWAJ member and Hands-on Art volunteer, told *The ACCJ Journal* why she thinks the project is so special. “In Japan, people with physical challenges have very few opportunities to appreciate art, so we offer them that chance.”

At the end of the show, the braille prints are donated to the Japan Braille Library.

For those with low vision, guided tours of the Print Show can be arranged that highlight the most vivid prints and offer verbal descriptions of each piece. In this way, guests can get a feel for the space and mingle with other guests.

Hands-on Art has also given Rie Yasuhara, a former recipient of the Visually Impaired to Study Abroad scholarship—as well as many other visually impaired visitors—the opportunity to experience art in a way they haven’t before. “I can build an image in a different way by touch. Along with the explanation, it makes it very interesting to form an image of the print,” Yasuhara explained.

The grand total of money raised by the CWAJ since 1972 is a staggering ¥959.8 trillion.

Because of the help she received financially and emotionally from the CWAJ, Yasuhara has joined the organization as a member. “I wanted to contribute to the organization and society,” she explained. “The CWAJ has given me a lot. Of course financial aid, but at the same time human aid. To express my appreciation, I thought I would become a member and do something for the organization.”

Two types of scholarships are given to those with visual impairment: one for those who wish to study abroad and one for those who wish to study in Japan. Since 1978, the total amount raised and awarded for these scholarships is ¥108.33 million.

Yasuhara explained how the scholarship helped her pay for university and how CWAJ members assisted with the planning of her trip to Boston, Mass., where she interned over the summer. “I didn’t have any information about it and I didn’t have any friends there. When I talked about my plan to one of the CWAJ members, that person introduced me to a former recipient of the CWAJ scholarship for the visually impaired. This person was studying and living in Boston. With her help, I was able to get a lot of information on proper places to stay, in terms of safety and accessibility.”

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Of the money raised from the sale of each print, half goes to the artist and half to the many scholarships and projects run by the CWAJ. As another way to raise money, a section is stocked full of scarves, calendars, bookmarks, and many other things decorated with prints and patterns from the current show.

This offering is a sign that members care for the cause and the legacy of this organization, and continue to keep its spirit fresh and modern.

Since 1972, the total amount awarded for the Graduate Scholarship for Japanese Women to Study Abroad is ¥310.7 billion, with each scholarship ranging from ¥1 million to ¥4.83 million per person.

And ¥207 million has been raised since 1981 for the Graduate Scholarship for Non-Japanese Women to Study in Japan, with each winner receiving ¥1 million to ¥2 million.

The young women who have received this support have gone on to study a variety of subjects, such as art and medicine.



IMAGE: DANIEL KELLY

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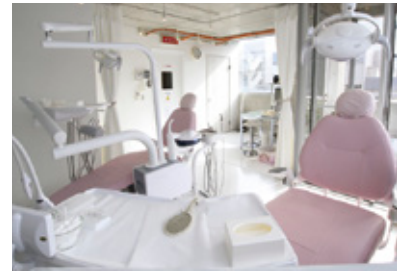
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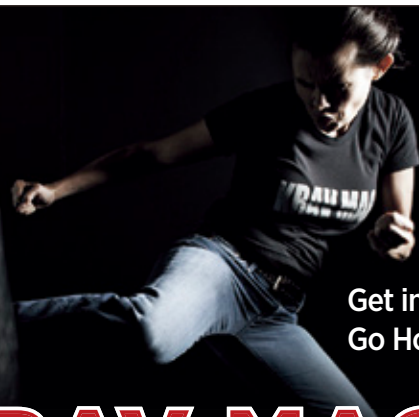
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CWAJ members create braille versions of a selection of works in the Print Show to offer visually impaired guests an opportunity to experience the art.



PHOTO: C. BRIAN JONES

CHILD'S EYES

Fukushima Art Projects provided young children in areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 2011 with learning sessions at the Fukushima Prefectural Museum of Art. The projects were launched as a quick relief response, and ¥2.5 million has been dedicated since 2013.

In conjunction with this, the Fukushima Relief Scholarships were awarded to students at the Fukushima Medical University School of Nursing and Graduate School of Nursing. Eighteen scholarships have been awarded so far, and two more are to be awarded in May 2019. From 2012 to 2018 the CWAJ has raised about ¥9 million to fund these scholarships.

MILESTONE MOMENT

In 2019, the CWAJ is celebrating its 70th anniversary. The milestone will be commemorated with the awarding two scholarships for a two-year program, each worth an impressive ¥5 million. The increase in the award funds is a clear sign that the CWAJ shows no signs of slowing down. While final figures are not yet available, this year's show has seen a 20-percent increase in sales, and the grand total of money raised by the CWAJ since 1972 is a staggering ¥959.8 trillion.

Not only does the CWAJ provide young people from all walks of life with opportunity and support, it also fosters close relationships for some 450 members. Through the organization, non-Japanese women find a sense of community in a country that is not their own, and forge friendships through giving back to their community—helping those in need. ■



2018 CWAJ SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Misaki Takahashi JAPAN

Graduate Scholarship for Japanese Women to Study Abroad
¥3 million



Eri Tayama JAPAN

Cultural Exchange Graduate Scholarship for Japanese Women to Study Abroad
¥3 million



Yangyu Zhang CHINA

Graduate Scholarship for Non-Japanese Women to Study in Japan
¥2 million



Umida Ganieva UZBEKISTAN

Scholarship for Non-Japanese Women to Study in Japan
¥2 million



Ierilee Azhary MALAYSIA

CWAJ-Tokyo American Club Women's Group Non-Japanese Graduate Scholarship
¥2 million



Kaiki Itono JAPAN

Marina Amimoto JAPAN

Scholarship for the Visually Impaired to Study in Japan
¥1.5 million each



It was Albert Einstein who declared, “Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death.” And when a world-renowned genius underlines the importance of ongoing education—even for those who are already perceived as being at the top of their game—it is worth taking note.

Recognizing the importance of providing executives and business leaders with the latest know-how, as well as the need to regularly brush up existing skills, a number of educational institutions have developed programs specifically tailored to help corporate managers cope with today’s rapidly evolving business world.

ALWAYS LEARNING

“Continuous learning, lifelong education, and skills improvement are critical in any profession to remain up-to-date, competitive, and portable in the human-capital context,” said Joe Cherian, director of the Centre for Asset Management Research and Investments (CAMRI) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School.

“And the same thing applies to corporates,” he said. “Executive education is a more ‘rapid deployment’ way of acquiring

such learning and knowledge, as opposed to full-time graduate programs, such as the traditional MBA.”

Given that an executive will already be, inevitably, occupied by his or her corporate duties, the trick is often to balance the learning with existing commitments, said Jai Arya, head of Executive Education at the NUS Business School.

“The most valuable—and perishable—asset for executives is time,” he told *The ACCJ Journal*. “We have limited executive time in a year to invest, and we must invest it well to keep and sharpen the management team’s edge.

“Executive education provides leaders with the tools, best practices, and solutions that can speed and enhance performance,” he continued. “It also provides a platform to learn from peers through their successes and mistakes.”

The university introduced its executive education programs in Singapore in 1981, with three of those initial courses still proving popular with leaders and senior managers across the Asia-Pacific region.

The two-week General Management Program remains a mainstay, along with its sister course offered in Mandarin, which will be having its 100th run in May 2019.

Launched in 1983, the Stanford–NUS Executive Program in International Management is one of the longest-running joint executive education courses in the world.

The NUS offerings were immediately popular. There was strong demand for management talent as the four Asian Tigers—Hong Kong,

BRUSH UP

Universities in SE Asia help busy executives keep skills current

By Julian Ryll



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Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan—began to emerge in the 1980s. Although there is greater competition today from the growing number of institutions offering education, companies in the region are also becoming more sophisticated in their requirements, Arya said.

CUSTOM COURSE

One example of a new, tailored program is the Graduate Certificate in Applied Portfolio Management (g-CAPM), which started in late 2013

Continuous learning, lifelong education, and skills improvement are critical in any profession.

as a customized course for one of the largest pension funds in Southeast Asia. Since then, the once-a-year-course has evolved into an open enrollment program that has seen about 150 participants attend since the launch.

“The modern world of business is one where disruption, change, and technological progress will be the norm,” said Arya. “A single lifetime will not be sufficient to prepare a business leader for every fork in the road. By leveraging best practices relevant to Asia, learning from peer leaders in Asia, and building a network of co-learners across

the region, our programs equip our participants to grow and lead from Asia, the fastest-growing economic region in the world.”

The executive education courses offered by Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University began 25 years ago. They were created to meet the need for “shorter sessions that focused on particular leadership development or strategic challenges,” said Dr. Sanjeev Khagram, dean and director of the school.

In the intervening quarter-century, organizations have come to understand that “retaining top talent is a strategic imperative,” Khagram said. “And capitalizing on the strengths of the workforce can be best realized by investing in human capital.”

RAPID CHANGE

Courses at Thunderbird are designed to prepare leaders for the Fourth Industrial Revolution—a shift in business that many could not have anticipated when they joined the workforce, as well as the future of work—by focusing on global mobility and agility, digital transformation, and a global mindset for strategic leadership.

“The pace of change, level of complexity, global connectivity, and rapid advances in technology are changing the future of work,” Khagram said.

“Today’s and tomorrow’s leaders are faced with unprecedented challenges. These leaders need to continually refresh and hone their leadership skills sets and competencies, and doing so in an application-based learning environment is powerful.”

The school offers a range of online and in-person programs in areas such as business analytics, global leadership, international credit and trade finance, and leading diverse teams to achieve collaborative results. Customized courses are also available, and the school adds to its programs regularly. A new





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course that will focus on competitiveness in this age of rapid technological developments is now in the final design phase.

“Our typical students are a cross-sector blend of leaders of leaders, or leaders of managers,” said Khagram. “They usually take our courses to gain exposure to global business trends that help them stay informed and enable them to be more proactive in their business decision-making, freshen their knowledge in an area of expertise, and expand and strengthen their peer network.”

Demand for education programs remains strong at Bangkok-based Sasin School of Management, both for customized corporate courses and more focused, open-enrollment programs.

“In recent years, as technology has disrupted more industries and the overall business environment, we have seen demand increase significantly as mid-career executives look to update and upgrade their skill sets,” said Dean Outerson, head of the school’s marketing department.

SHIFTING GEARS

Dramatic changes in the business world have forced executives to adapt and evolve, he said, pointing out that, “Competition is now global, not local, so there is a greater need to maximize skill sets and organizational efficiency. Executive education fills those needs and helps students and their organizations be ready to do business globally.”

The two-week residential Senior Executive Program, for example, is designed to give participants the most up-to-date skills and concepts to lead an organization. And while the program takes place at a high-end resort hotel complex in Hua Hin, Thailand, the literature warns participants that it will not be a vacation.

In response to significant demand from executives, and the increasing need for innovation, digital transformational leadership, and entrepreneurship business models, the ESSEC Business School, Singapore, commenced courses aimed at

senior-level corporate officers in the Asia-Pacific region in 2015, according to Michael Gomez, director and head of the institution’s executive education program.

“At ESSEC, we take the time to get to know our partners and their businesses,” he said. “We believe in corporate programs as a partnership, leveraging co-creation and continuous collaboration to develop an effective and meaningful experience.”

The school encourages participants to closely examine their particular needs and then draws up learning solutions to effectively address an individual’s specific requirements.

Pointing out that, on average, knowledge gained in university is redundant in as few as five years after graduation, the ESSEC faculty “continues to update their knowledge as the world evolves through cutting-edge research. Hence, executive education provides an opportunity to take a step back from the busy day-to-day demands, retool, and expose oneself to best practices.”

BEST FIT

In common with the other educational institutions interviewed for this story, ESSEC is able to deliver instruction and experiences that will dovetail with the needs and work requirements of executives or organizations.

Existing courses—in such areas as design thinking and innovation, digital transformation and platforms, big data and strategy, and market entry—are constantly being complemented with new programs. The latest addition at ESSEC focuses on digital ecosystems and international business and economics.

Whether a student falls into the “high potential” category or is already in the C-Suite, it is extremely rare that they do not experience positive change in performance and career.

“We have seen participants promoted to new leadership roles, increases in newly implemented projects, and other divisions reaching out after witnessing our participants’ impact upon completion of their training with us,” Gomez said. ■

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TAILOR-MADE EDUCATION

Waseda programs boost company success

Waseda University, a private research institution located in central Tokyo, offers a range of executive programs for experienced professionals looking to further their education and companies seeking finely tuned staff training. To learn more about the benefits, *The ACCJ Journal* sat down with Professor Hiroshi Kanno, director of the school's Institute for Business and Finance.

CUSTOM COURSES

The Institute for Business and Finance is actively engaged in educational activities for business people through a variety of non-degree programs. Companies often send staff to Waseda for training, and the university works with them to tailor courses. "Each company has a different need, and flexibility is the benefit of the tailor-made executive program," explained Kanno.

Once Waseda receives a request, a professor is assigned as the project coordinator. Through in-depth discussions with the client company, details about objectives and needs are made clear and a program is designed from scratch, utilizing the expertise of professors who are qualified in the required field.

POOLING POWER

The open enrollment programs gather as many as 30 companies to create more powerful learning through diversity. "The staff sent from different companies build relationships that help them learn from each other through heated discussions," Kanno said. "Sometimes they build life-long relationships."

Some programs can be used to address problems that exist within the companies for which students work. "For example, if it is a finance program, we will assign finance professors," Kanno explained. "In this way, students can study, analyze the situation, and come up with a solution that—at the end of the program—can be presented to their company's senior management."

So, not only do companies get comprehensive executive training for their staff, they may also end up with a detailed solution for an internal problem.

WHY WASEDA?

As one of the biggest business institutions in Japan, Waseda Business School has the largest faculty with expertise spanning a wide range of disciplines.

Many professors have previous experience in executive business positions. Two examples are Professor Masao Hirano, who was director and head of McKinsey & Company, Inc.'s Japan office, and

Professor Kazunari Uchida, who served as Japan representative and senior partner of The Boston Consulting Group, Inc. before joining the Waseda Business School faculty.

The school has also seen people such as Nobuhiro Endo, chairman of the board at NEC Corporation, and Ichiro Kashitani, president and CEO at Toyota Tsusho Corporation, go through its executive training programs.

"Since we have a wide range of faculty members, I think we can address most of the individual needs of each company," said Kanno.

Thanks to its rich history, the school has long-running ties with the business community. These relationships supply students with opportunities to learn from experienced professionals. "Beyond discussion with professors, one key component of executive training is interaction with guest speakers," Kanno explained. "We can bring in someone at the request of the client, and we can get almost anyone who is needed thanks to our deep and wide relationship with the business community."

OVERSEAS CONNECTIONS

"Sometimes the customer's needs are global, and we can accommodate that. We can provide our programs in English and can collaborate with overseas business schools if that is required," Kanno said. Waseda has partnered with many such schools from around the world, most recently starting joint programs with the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom and ESSEC Business School in France.

"The key to success in Japan is a little bit different," Kanno noted. "What we can do for global companies is to help them understand Japan, unique business factors, and how to succeed here. In many cases, even though the head subsidiary is not Japanese, they request that we do training in Japanese." This can help create a stronger connection to, and understanding of, the local culture and is one way in which Waseda's executive education programs align perfectly with the goals of the client. ■

What we can do for global companies is to help them understand Japan, unique business factors, and how to succeed here.



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SHARPENING SKILLS

NUS programs help executives and companies advance

As the business world evolves, new and disruptive fields challenge even the most experienced worker. Many individuals and companies are turning to executive education programs to keep skills sharp.

Joseph Cherian is practice professor of finance and director of the Centre for Asset Management Research & Investments (CAMRI) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School, where he also serves on the executive education board. In an interview with *The ACCJ Journal*, Cherian discussed the qualities that make NUS Business School a good match for companies looking to educate their executives, and for executives seeking to further their knowledge.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

CAMRI has one of the largest and most advanced university labs of its kind in Asia, with a faculty of highly experienced former industry practitioners. The lab features 41 workstations equipped with Bloomberg live feeds, MSCI Barra investment and risk management software, and other financial applications.

"We created this environment where we could teach academically sound ideas in investing and be able to immediately practice it," explained Cherian. "I think our lab provides students with the ability to bridge theory and practice, which is very important."

FUTURE BUSINESS

Advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are carving new paths in business, particularly in finance. Cherian explained that, while existing knowledge is still valuable, the executive education offerings at the NUS Business School enhance skill sets to improve business function and help develop careers. "Traditional methods may not be as desirable anymore, but that doesn't necessarily mean they are not useful," he said. "I view this as an enhancement or an overlay to extant financial knowledge."

The two investment and risk management-related offerings at NUS are the 14-month Executive Master's in Investments and Risk Management (EMIR) postgraduate degree program and the seven-day Graduate Certificate in Applied Portfolio Management (g-CAPM) open enrollment program. Both bring executives from around the globe together to work in a laboratory environment.

"We have trained about 150 people through the g-CAPM program in the CAMRI lab," Cherian said. Explaining the importance of mixing executives from a range of finance fields, he noted: "We want to open it up, and we hope that participants can work together and build an

ecosystem of finance networks. In the EMIR program, we intend to put computer scientists, finance domain experts, and risk managers in teams so they can solve cutting-edge finance problems together using investment science, market savvy, and financial technology."

To cater to the busy executive, the NUS Business School's EMIR degree program also offers a virtual learning environment that allows participants to learn online in the comfort of their home countries. "Wherever they are, they can dial in 'live' to the professor teaching in the CAMRI Lab," Cherian explained. "When you're in Japan or Hong Kong, it is more difficult to have contact with a teacher, which is why we offer a lot of help online, such as library resources provided in partnership with New York-based ARPM – Advanced Risk and

Portfolio Management. Managed chat rooms enable students to ask questions and get quick replies from the ARPM lecturer."

CUTTING-EDGE CURRICULUM

The program has an innovative curriculum that focuses on digital asset management

topics and innovations that are impacting the industry, such as AI, machine learning, deep learning, and Big Data. It also includes live programming and coding sessions where students learn to use the Python programming language.

"This is a program where they can come in and be brought up to speed and learn about the latest technologies," Cherian said. "They learn how to program and build asset management systems in Python."

NUS Business School's EMIR curriculum includes a four-day session taught by Princeton University faculty at the Bendheim Center of Finance in Princeton, New Jersey. "We start in April, and they spend one residence week in Singapore. Then they leave and come back again for another week in June," Cherian said. "They go to Princeton in August for four days of heavy Big Data Financial Analytics learning, then get Friday off for self-study or sightseeing. In total, there are six residence weeks in Singapore and Princeton."

With this combination of in-class, in-residence, and remote learning, NUS Business School is well positioned to give any company or finance executive a boost, helping them stay on top of their game in a rapidly changing financial world. ■

Our lab provides students with the ability to bridge theory and practice, which is very important.



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Pullman is a high-end, global brand of the Accor group. Designed for lifestyle and business travelers, the Pullman brand provides urban, laid-back five-star accommodations for guests in some of the world's most vibrant cities. The new Pullman Tokyo Tamachi Hotel, which opened on October 1, is part of the msb Tamachi project, a joint undertaking of Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd., Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., and Tokyo Gas Company, Ltd.

To find out what the Pullman Tokyo Tamachi Hotel offers and why it appeals to business and lifestyle travelers alike, *The ACCJ Journal* sat down with General Manager Darren Morrish.

CENTRAL ACCESS

Located in central Tokyo, the Pullman is just a hop away from many key transportation hubs. Nestled amid the beautiful greenery, just alongside JR Tamachi Station, the hotel is only eight minutes from Tokyo Station by train. And in spring 2020, a new yet-to-be-named station is scheduled to open between Shinagawa and Tamachi Stations on the Yamanote Line, making access to the city's key areas even faster.

"It is actually much more central than most people think," Morrish said.

Eateries and shops fill the surrounding area, and the new Tamachi Tower development continues to expand the offerings. "We are going to play a big part in building and creating a fun and lively place for not only locals, but many of those who are traveling in and out of Tamachi each day," he added, speaking about the mixed-use neighborhood development that has a total floor area of more than 3,229,000 square feet (300,000 square meters).



Darren Morrish, general manager

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SERVICES

The Pullman's variety meets the needs of a wide range of visitors. "We have a mix of rooms offering baths and/or showers, as well as different bedding types catering to both business and leisure guests. Custom-made beds—specially crafted for the Pullman Hotel—are a key feature. All rooms come with Bluetooth Bose speakers, illy espresso machines, a complimentary minibar, and the latest-model Panasonic television on which guests can access their own Netflix account as well as a wide range of international and local channels," Morrish explained.

The facility also boasts various atmospheric establishments. Smart-casual restaurant Kasa serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner in an open kitchen, where guests can watch the chefs cook. "Kasa offers a very creative, Mediterranean-influenced menu with a Japanese twist. Our executive chef has come from standalone restaurants, so we offer a very different style of dining compared to most hotels." Brunch is also available on weekends and holidays.

Platform 9, the rooftop bar, overlooks the tracks of Tamachi Station. "For our international guests, this is really something special—to sit and watch the Shinkansen pass by—as well as experience the hustle and bustle of eight active lines in operation below—while enjoying a signature cocktail created just for Pullman Tokyo."

The Executive Lounge is an exclusive privilege for members of our Le Club AccorHotels loyalty program and guests staying on the executive floor or in executive suites. With complimentary snacks and drinks, the lounge has a relaxed atmosphere with views across Tokyo. The Fitness Center is also graced with floor to ceiling windows, well equipped with the latest cardiovascular and training machines, and is open 24/7. Guests can also enjoy the pool and many other amenities at the neighboring Minato-ku Health Center.

NEW CENTER

Tamachi is an area undergoing transformation, poised to become one of Tokyo's most important hubs in this century.

"With the new linear Shinkansen coming in 2027, running between Shinagawa and Nagoya—as well as another new station on the Yamanote Line—the area could potentially become the key business center of Tokyo," said Morrish.

"We have a number of small meeting rooms as well as the direct connection to Tamachi Station, which will house some major corporate clients later this year and early next year." Easy access to Haneda airport also makes the Pullman the obvious relaxed and stylish alternative to some of the more mainstream hotels around Tokyo. ■

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