



Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California

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PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT For Immediate Release

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Local Japanese American Organization Raises Over \$2 Million for Japan

Becomes largest JA community based relief fund in nation

May 4, 2011 (San Francisco, CA) - On March 11, 2011 the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCNC) based in San Francisco's Japantown established the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund to aid the victims and survivors of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The relief fund is a community based volunteer citizen to citizen effort to help turn hopelessness into hope.

"Our hope is that one by one we can all make a difference, helping us all to realize we are truly citizens of the world. One dollar, one act of humanity at a time, we are making a difference in the lives of so many," says Paul Osaki, Executive Director at the JCCNC.



The Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund has become the largest Japanese American community based relief fund in the United States with close to 9,000 donors raising over \$2 million dollars to date. The fund is supported by close to 80 fundraising events being planned by ordinary citizens, non-profit organizations, schools, businesses and professional organizations, over 20,000 members who have joined their Causes.com campaign and over 400 volunteers who help on various fundraising events and provide daily assistance to the Center's administration of the fund.

Schools have hosted bake sales and car washes, children have sold their toys, parents have hosted birthday parties for their children asking guests to donate to the relief fund instead of buying presents, and restaurants and small businesses are organizing events throughout the bay area and beyond.

This grassroots relief effort is an action campaign not just about donations. "People want to get involved and make a difference," mentions Osaki. "That is the essence of a community based effort and the ultimate purpose of a community center."



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Donations made to the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund are making an impact in northern Japan. The following list shows donations that have been sent or are on their way to these affected areas:

- **Kobe YMCA** - \$130,000.00 (Assisting with 20,000 survivors who have resettled in the area, providing care, mental health and post traumatic stress counseling);
- **Sendai YMCA** - \$200,000.00 (Sustaining shelters and childcare facility in the Sendai and Matsushima area, Miyagi Prefecture);
- **Morioka YMCA** - \$200,000.00 (Working in the coastal towns hardest hit by the tsunami);
- **Tochigi YMCA** - \$200,000.00 (Closest facility to the Fukushima area, assisting victims forced to evacuate because of the nuclear radiation exposure).

To ensure funds are made available to those who need it most, the JCCCNC sent two volunteers to Japan on April 18th to meet with other service organizations to determine the changing needs and gaps in services, and to visit the Tohoku region to determine strategies to address the mental health needs and post traumatic stress counseling needs. But most of all they brought everyone's thoughts and prayers of support and hope to share with the people of Japan.

You can support the people of Japan and the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund efforts by making a donation on their website at www.jcccnc.org. To receive updates about the Relief Fund, you can visit their website or join their Facebook and Causes.com pages.

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About the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund

The Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund efforts are part of a national network in Japan called the Japan Civil Network for Disaster Relief in East Japan which consists of over 50 non-profit, non-governmental and private organizations helping to coordinate a public response to the needs of this disaster. The Relief Fund is represented through partnership and support of the YMCA Japan Alliance and the Kobe YMCA.

The Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund is a three-fold plan over the next several months:

- **Relief** (Meeting immediate life saving and survival needs)
- **Recovery** (Creating sustainability, temporary shelters and housing needs, Post Traumatic Stress counseling, supplies for children, families and seniors)
- **Rebuilding** (Supporting community and neighborhood capital and improvement projects and programs)

About the JCCCNC

Envisioned by the Japanese American community, JCCCNC will be an everlasting foundation of our Japanese American ancestry, cultural heritage, histories and traditions. The JCCCNC strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community through programs, affordable services and facility usage. The JCCCNC is a non-profit community center based in San Francisco.