PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT
For Immediate Release

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JCCCNC TABEMASHO 2015: Cultural Connections
to Honor Japan Airlines and Kintetsu International

San Francisco (September 4, 2015) – The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) will be hosting their annual fundraising dinner, TABEMASHO 2015: Cultural Connections on Saturday, September 19th at their facility at 1840 Sutter Street in San Francisco. But equally important, they will also recognize two longtime supporters, Japan Airlines (JAL) and Kintetsu International (KIE), who have contributed to the growth of J CCCNC’s U.S.-Japan programs and events and have created “cultural connections” between the United States and Japan for the past 25 years.

The commitment of JAL and KIE to the JCCCNC and the organization’s goal to enhance the understanding and appreciation among the Japanese American community, American public and people of Japan, has allowed the JCCCNC to create programs and coordinate travel to Japan on multiple levels. Visits and meetings with high level government officials, business leaders, local and prefectural governments, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), schools, senior centers, orphanages, YMCAs and many other organizations, many of whom the JCCCNC still partners with today, have played an important role in enhancing their Japan cultural programs.

With the support of JAL and KIE, the JCCCNC has organized over 50 trips to Japan, connecting thousands of individuals through JCCCNC sponsored or coordinated programs and projects, such as:

**Conferences and Workshops** that bring together leaders, ordinary citizens and academic, culinary and health professionals, to share their knowledge and expertise, like those of the 2007 San Francisco-Osaka Culinary Tour celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Sister City Relationship.

**Programs** for youth, families, seniors and children that connect them to their ancestral roots and provide a first-hand experience to learn about and feel Japan through sports and homestays, like the Shinzen Goodwill Program, researching their ancestors, or even just to smile over a cup of tea

**Cultural Tours** that allow participants to see, taste and experience cities such as Hiroshima, Osaka and Sapporo, but also towns like Kurashiki in Okayama, whose canal area dates back to the Edo period and the historic town of Arimatsu, which is famous for its high quality shibori textiles.
Relief Support that gave donors to the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (Kobe) and Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund the chance to provide love and hope to survivors in Japan.

The JCCCNC’s relationship with JAL began in 1990 with the *Japanese American US-Japan Relations Program*. The goal of this program was to introduce to the people of Japan, Japanese American representatives along with the community’s history and experiences. Back then, very few people had knowledge of Japanese Americans, including government officials and business leaders. These early visits introduced the JCCCNC to many organizations and individuals and began to lay the foundation for future programs that were created to connect the two cultures. JAL has continued to extend their generosity as an Annual Partner and as JCCCNC’s preferred Airline Provider with airfare to Japan for fundraisers, special rates for tours and members, providing excellent support for all travel participants. The JCCCNC believes it is the exceptional service that begins and ends the trip that ensures a memorable experience for all.

“Our partnership with JAL began in 1990. Those early visits to Japan opened the doors that have allowed us to establish relationships that paved the way for all of the exchange programs we have created for the past 25 years.”

– Donna Ong-Kimura, President

In 1997, the JCCCNC began their relationship with KIE for the SF-Osaka Sister City 40th Anniversary *Citizen Ambassador Conference*. Over 170 delegates from San Francisco from various professions, backgrounds, and walks of life participated in a week-long conference of discussions and trainings to share about the two cultures. From couples and family tours, to groups of 50 or more, like the 1997 conference, KIE has coordinated nearly every aspect of travel for the JCCCNC and its members providing individual care to allow the connecting of cultures to be the highlight of each trip. As JCCCNC’s Preferred Travel Consultants, KIE provides annual support for fundraisers, special rates for tours and member packages and have been outstanding providers of travel coordination. Their support has allowed each and every JCCCNC Japan travel participant to have a unique, and for many a once in a lifetime, experience.

“Without KIE many of our cultural exchange programs would not have been possible. It has been their expertise especially with their staff in Osaka, like Morimichi Hiratsuka, that have been invaluable to us.”

– Paul Osaki, Executive Director

At the September 19th event, the JCCCNC will celebrate their two honorees with its usual flair. Popular Bay Area restaurants and businesses, such as Bashamichi, Delica, Izakaya Roku, Kirimachi Ramen, Kui Shin Bo, La Mar, True Sake and Yamasho will line the Center’s beautifully decorated gymnasium serving Hors d’oeuvres and sake tastings; community chefs, lead by Facebook’s Wade Tamura will serve delicious home-cooked treats and Nikkei comfort foods; and SF Awakko Ren will take the stage to rally the crowd with an awadori performance.
The event will also present a silent and live auction featuring a trip to Japan for two with airfare donated by JAL and five-night accommodations provided by KIE.

Supporting the event are Presenting Sponsors Japan Airlines, Kintetsu International, The Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, and Union Bank; Benefactor Sponsor Comcast, Wells Fargo; Patron Sponsor Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California, Minami Tamaki LLP, and Pacific Gas & Electric Company. Registration and silent auction will open promptly at 3:00 p.m., doors and appetizer vendors will open at 4:00 p.m., and the dinner program will commence at 5:00 p.m. Cost is $175 per person for reserved table seating and $50 for children 6-12 years. RSVP deadline is Thursday, September 10, 2015.

Call (415) 567-5505 or visit www.jcccn.org for additional information on the event. The JCCCNC is located at 1840 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115.

Proceeds from the event will go towards the development of dynamic cultural, educational, social, and outreach programs that serve the 185,000 visitors the Center welcomes each year.

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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.