



Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California

1840 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 • Tel: 415-567-5505 • Fax: 415-567-4222 • www.jcccnc.org

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT For Immediate Release

Contact:

Paul Osaki, Executive Director; Posaki@jcccnc.org
Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California
1840 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 567-5505, www.jcccnc.org

AT&T Contributes \$30,000 to help Japantown “Go Wireless” J-Town Connected Coming to Japantown

San Francisco, CA (February 23, 2011) – The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (JCCCNC), today announced that it has received a \$30,000 contribution from AT&T to facilitate “free” wireless technology for Japantown and to upgrade the technology capabilities of the JCCCNC’s current U.S. – Japan Computer Learning Center to the new **J-Town Connected Center** (JTCC). The funds will support the wireless infrastructure and development of the new JTCC, including technological equipment, software and educational workshops for youth and seniors to learn, and to take advantage of the latest Wi-Fi and social media capabilities. The JCCCNC envisions the JTCC as a vital communication link and technology resource for the Japantown community in helping it take full advantage of the technology of the 21st century.

“Extending better public access as well as integration of free wireless technology throughout the JCCCNC and Japantown will help users of our facility and Japantown promoting a better quality of life for the neighborhood and allowing us better access to the world wide web and the unlimited capabilities of social media and interaction. The JCCCNC would like to thank



AT&T for their continued generosity and support,” commented Dianne Fukami, President of the Board of Directors of the JCCCNC.

The JCCCNC U.S. – Japan Computer Learning Center began in 1995 with a grant from the Mitsubishi International Corporation and was at the time one of the first community based bi-lingual state of the art computer learning centers in San Francisco. It started with 10 workstations and one teacher station and throughout the years has introduced thousands to the power of the personal computer and for many seniors their first introduction to using the age of the computer.

The U.S. – Japan Computer lab has also served as an internet hub for improving U.S.-Japan relations by acting as a children and youth inter-pal exchange program between public schools in Japan and the United States. Schools districts throughout San Francisco that have participated with this program in the past include the Western Addition, Richmond, Potrero Hill and Bay View Hunters Point districts.

In early 2010 with the addition of IMac computers and armed with state of the art graphic design, video editing software and HD video cameras, the computer learning center entered into a new age. One of the first projects was to help implement the JCCCNC’s newest project, *Dreams Finally Realized – The Untold Stories of California Nisei Forced out of Higher Education*. Their role was to interview and create digital histories, which could be shared on-line, about thirteen Nisei who received honorary degrees as part of Assembly Bill 37. The interns spent countless hours on the new computers editing video, designing flyers, and communicating via Skype with other interns across the nation to organize and produce the heartwarming stories now publicly available on sites like Youtube and Facebook.



Emily Furutani, a college intern from San Francisco State University stated, *“The IMac computers and software made communication much faster, and were vital for our projects. We’re excited to share these inspirational stories of the Nisei on the world wide web and share them with the entire world, now their stories will live on forever and they can easily be passed on from generation to generation.”*

The success of the Dreams Finally Realized project really showcased the potential and the need to bring new technology and resources to the community.

The J-Town Connected Center will provide public wireless/mobile capabilities for the visitors and patrons of Japantown to get connected as well as the hundreds of people that visit and utilize the Center everyday. In addition to offering a multitude of new on-line programs, classes and workshops that will familiarize users with current and cutting edge technology otherwise limited or unavailable to members of the Japantown community, the JTCC will support other community non-profits through low-cost or free training programs to become more self-reliant and lessen their dependency on expensive outside consultants.

“The JCCCNC J-Town Connect Center will bring wireless broadband, additional classes and training as well as the power of social media to Japantown. By focusing on the need for widespread use and adoption from youth to seniors, the JCCCNC seeks to empower more people to become digitally literate. By upgrading its Digital Center, the JCCCNC ensures that low income people,



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diverse ethnicities and age groups all benefit from today's technology, leaving no one behind," stated District 5 Supervisor, Ross Mirkarimi.

For more information about the J-Town Connected Center, contact Paul Osaki at (415) 567-5505 or POsaki@jcccnc.org.

About the JCCCNC

Envisioned by the Japanese American community, the 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 administrative support and facilities for other local service organizations. The JCCCNC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center based in San Francisco.

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