

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Japan-America Society of Indiana

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### Four Japanese Agencies and Six Funds Selected to Receive Initial \$600,000 from the *Japan-America Society of Indiana* To Assist March Earthquake Relief

Indianapolis, May 6, 2011 -- It was only hours after the devastating March 11 Japan earthquake and tsunami that the Japan-America Society of Indiana established the **Japan Earthquake Relief Fund**. “We quickly became the focal point for the outpouring of concern and contributions for our friends in Japan affected by the earthquake,” said Theresa Kulczak, executive director. “Now we’re making sure an initial \$600,000 disbursement is contributed to the right places,” she said. Through the Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, 100 percent of donations will go to organizations directly providing assistance.

Aiding disasters in Japan is nothing new to the Society. Based on its experience serving as a resource during the Kobe Earthquake of 1995, the Society knew the logistical problems involved in shipping supplies to Japan. It also knew financial donations would be the most effective means to support the relief effort. JASI partnered with four major banks -- Chase, Fifth Third, Old National, and PNC -- to create a fund accessible statewide, with donations accepted at all branches of these financial institutions.

Commitments to the JASI Japan Earthquake Relief Fund now total about \$750,000, placing Indiana 4th among Japan America Societies nationwide in donations received, ranking behind New York, Los Angeles, and Hawaii. With several key

grassroots fundraising programs to be completed, it is anticipated that the fund will continue to grow, Kulczak said.

The Japan-America Society of Indiana is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit cultural and educational organization serving as Indiana's leading resource on Japan. Founded in 1988, the Society is supported by a diverse membership of businesses, communities, educational institutions, families and individuals located throughout the state.

"Since March when the disasters hit Japan, we've been deeply gratified by the overwhelming support of Hoosiers and Japanese living here. Businesses, universities, communities, not-for-profit organizations, and individuals have really rallied in expressing heartfelt support for the people of Japan," said JASI's Board President, Pawel Fludzinski, (pronounce: Pah-vel Flude-zinsky) who is also global brand development leader, diabetes unit, for Eli Lilly and Company.

A donor list, calendar of relief events for Japan, and information on how to donate can be found on the JASI website, [www.japanindiana.org](http://www.japanindiana.org)

### **Relief Agencies and Funds in Japan Selected**

The JASI Earthquake Relief Fund Committee has designated four relief organizations on the front lines of relief and recovery, and six direct relief funds established by the local prefecture governments, which are like US states, and municipal governments in the most devastated areas of the Tohoku region in northeastern Japan. A second disbursement will be made to assist the continued recovery and rebuilding efforts. The first round of funds totaling \$600,000 will be distributed to these relief agencies in Japan:

**Japanese Red Cross Society to receive US \$100,000** <http://www.jrc.or.jp/english/> (English) <http://www.jrc.or.jp/index.html> (Japanese)

The Japanese Red Cross Agency was founded in 1877 and has an extensive network of branches in cities, towns and villages throughout Japan. Its headquarters are in Tokyo and local chapters are in all 47 prefectures, operating 92 hospitals and 79 blood centers across Japan. JRCS conducted relief activities for victims in the Great

Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake which hit the Kobe area in 1995 as well as the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake.

Today, JRCS has a well-organized domestic disaster response system, with 488 response teams throughout the country and 6,844 medical relief personnel. For the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami disasters, in addition to the special relief efforts, JRCS will distribute collected funds directly to individual victims who lost their homes or family members. The Japanese Red Cross Society is independently operated and based in Japan and is not affiliated with the American Red Cross.

### **JEN -- Japanese Emergency NGOs -- to receive US \$50,000**

<http://www.jen-npo.org/en/> (English) <http://www.jen-npo.org/> (Japanese)

JEN is an international humanitarian relief and development organization with extensive experience in Japan, spending five years in Niigata in response to the 2004 and 2007 earthquakes. Funds from the JASI Japan Earthquake Relief Fund will support their work in Ishinomaki, in Miyagi Prefecture, which is a fishing village that is among the hardest hit by the tsunami. Initially working in a shelter with approximately 2,500 people, JEN will provide emergency relief supplies and will reach out to the community to identify and support the community, including those who are among the most vulnerable (the elderly, disabled, those with special medical needs), and determine the longer term needs of community and other hard-to-reach villages.

### **Ashinaga to receive \$50,000**

<http://www.ashinaga.org/en/> (English); <http://www.ashinaga.org/> (Japanese)

Ashinaga is a Japanese not-for-profit organization that specializes in providing assistance to orphans. They are assisting children who lost their parents in the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami by providing financial, educational, and emotional support. Ashinaga is establishing an orphanage called "Tohoku Rainbow House" modeled after the successful "Rainbow House" orphanage that was created after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake hit the Kobe area in 1995.

### **Save the Children (Japan) to receive \$50,000**

[http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.6621121/k.3D08/Japan\\_Earthquake\\_Tsunami\\_Relief.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.6621121/k.3D08/Japan_Earthquake_Tsunami_Relief.htm) (English); <http://www.savechildren.or.jp/top/jpn/> (Japanese)

Save the Children has been working in Japan for 25 years. In the aftermath of the disaster, Save the Children deployed emergency response teams to assess the needs of children and their families. Multiple child-friendly spaces have been established in evacuation centers in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, where displaced families are staying and additional child-friendly spaces are being established. Donations will exclusively be used to help provide disaster relief and support for all affected children in Japan. In addition to immediate relief, this fund will help support long-term recovery plans to restore education and child care in the communities of Japan ravaged by the disasters.

### **Direct Relief Funds Established by Prefectures and Municipalities**

Three locations which have sister relationships with Indiana suffered different levels of damage and face varying degrees of devastation and disruption to daily life. In some cases, “our sisters in Japan are also providing vital relief and support to many displaced Japanese from more devastated areas,” Kulczak explained.

The following funds were created by the local prefectures and municipalities in the most devastated areas to provide direct relief to the victims affected by this crisis.

#### **Tochigi Prefecture’s “Tochimarufund” Receives US \$100,000**

**Tochigi Prefecture**, Indiana’s sister “state”, received substantial damages in the northeastern part of the prefecture, including damage to **Honda’s** R&D center located in this region, and as far south as Utsunomiya, the capital city. As of last week, some areas of Tochigi were still without utilities and water. “Our friends at the prefectural government are also involved in major efforts to house and feed 2000 evacuees from the most severely affected areas, including Miyagi,” Kulczak said. Tochigi Prefecture is also home to Tochigi City, sister city of Evansville, and Mibu Town, is developing a sister relationship with Logansport.

#### **City of Kuji, Iwate Prefecture’s “Kuji Relief Fund” Receives US \$50,000**

Iwate Prefecture, just north of Miyagi, is home to **Kuji City**, the sister city of **Franklin**. Kuji suffered extensive damages, including the loss of many fishing boats, which is how many citizens make their living, but the loss of life was not to the degree initially expected because the city is located within a naturally protected bay.

### **City of Kakuda, Miyagi Prefecture's "Kakuda Relief Fund" Receives US \$50,000**

Miyagi Prefecture, the area hardest hit by the earthquake and tsunami, is home to **Kakuda City**, the sister city of **Greenfield** and the location of **Keihin North America's** main operations in Japan. Kakuda suffered considerable damage but escaped the total devastation that many parts of the prefecture experienced.

These prefectural governments established special emergency relief funds following the threefold disasters of the earthquake, tsunami, and uncertain conditions of the nuclear reactors:

- Fukushima Prefecture Relief Fund Receives US \$50,000
- Miyagi Prefecture Relief Fund Receives US \$50,000
- Iwate Prefecture Relief Fund Receives US \$50,000.

### **JASI Receives Special Video Message from The Honorable Tomikazu Fukuda, Governor of Tochigi Prefecture (Indiana's Sister State)**

"The Japan-America Society of Indiana deeply appreciated the special video message from Tomikazu Fukuda, Governor of Tochigi Prefecture, expressing his gratitude to the people of Indiana for their support" said Kulczak. He cites the ongoing challenges facing Tochigi Prefecture as they continue to recover from the disasters, and he thanks the people of Indiana for their support, calling the friendship a "beacon of light." The video can be viewed at [www.japanindiana.org](http://www.japanindiana.org).

The Japan-America Society of Indiana provides cultural and arts programming, business networking opportunities, corporate seminars, protocol training, social activities and referral services. The JASI office and its bilingual staff serve as an information resource for Japanese and American members and the public. The Japan-

America Society of Indiana is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies, headquartered in Washington D.C., with over forty chapters nationwide.