

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Japan-America Society
of Indiana, Inc.**



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INDIANAPOLIS – May 20, 2015 - On Thursday, June 4th the Japan-America Society of Indiana will host its Annual Gala at the Indiana Roof Ballroom, 140 West Washington Street, Indianapolis. The event will feature keynote remarks from Mitoji Yabunaka, Former Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Japan. The Gala begins with a reception for patrons at 5:00 p.m., continues with a general reception at 6:00 p.m., and finishes with a dinner and program beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Mitoji Yabunaka is a senior statesman of Japan and renowned opinion leader, as well as author of several best-selling books in Japan, including the newly released, *PATH OF JAPAN* (2015). He served as Consul-General of Japan in Chicago from 1998 to 2002. From 2002-2005 he was Director General of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and represented Japan in its negotiations with North Korea. In 2008 Mr. Yabunaka was appointed Vice-Minister for Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following his retirement from government service, he has served as Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Adviser to Nomura Research Institute, and Professor at Ritsumeikan University and Osaka University.

“Mitoji Yabunaka is highly revered in Japan and is renowned internationally as one of Japan’s leading diplomats, appearing frequently in Japanese media. He is known in Japan as “Mr. Diplomacy” for leading several key negotiations on behalf of Japan. Mr. Yabunaka is a long-time friend of the Midwest, and we are honored to welcome him back in his first visit to Indiana since serving as Consul-General of Japan in Chicago,” commented Melanie Hart, President of the Japan-America Society of Indiana and President of Tsuchiya Group North America.

The gala program will also include remarks from the Consul-General of Japan in Chicago Toshiyuki Iwado, and Indiana Lieutenant Governor Sue Ellspermann.

The Japan-America Society of Indiana's "Bridge of Friendship Award" will be presented to Tom Easterday, Executive Vice President, Secretary and Chief Legal Officer of Subaru of Indiana Automotive.

Entertainment will be provided by a musical ensemble from Tokyo, called "Stringraphy", a type of sound installation, using a myriad of silk strings. "We're excited to bring Stringraphy from Tokyo and showcase the group in its first appearance in the United States. The instrument is an original invention by Kazu Mizushima, applying the principles of the string telephone. One could never imagine the music produced by the strumming of strings and cups; it's an astonishing and enjoyable performance." said Theresa Kulczak, Executive Director of the Japan-America Society of Indiana. The performance of "Stringraphy" is made possible in part by the support of United Airlines.

The Japan-America Society of Indiana's Annual Gala brings together corporate and community leaders and individuals from throughout the Midwest. Proceeds from the evening benefit the Japan-America Society of Indiana and its efforts to promote friendship, exchange and cooperation between Indiana and Japan.

Registration is available online and through the office of the Japan-America Society of Indiana at www.japanindiana.org or 317-635-0123.

Hoosier Energy is the 2015 Gala Title Sponsor. Additional sponsors include: AISIN; Barnes & Thornburg; Duke Energy; Honda Manufacturing of Indiana; Subaru of Indiana Automotive; Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana; United Airlines; DEEM; Eli Lilly and Company; GECOM Corporation; Indiana Economic Development Corporation; TASUS Corporation, Tsuchiya Group North America; TOA (USA); Toyota Industrial Equipment Manufacturing; Toyota Material Handling U.S.A.; BKD, LLP; Carroll County Economic Development Corporation; Cornerstone Environmental, Health & Safety; Elwood Staffing; Enkei America; Fifth Third Bank; Gaylor Electric; Greater Indianapolis Foreign Trade Zone (INzone); Greater Lafayette Commerce; Greenville Technology; Indiana Packers Corporation; Integrity Metals; Ivy Tech Community College; JA Benefits; JPMorgan Chase; Keihin North America; KYB Americas Corporation; Mainscape; Nachi America; NTN Driveshaft; Ogletree Deakins Law Firm; Old National; The Phoenix Group/Falcon; Plante Moran; SMC Corporation of America; Vectren Corporation.

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About Japan-America Society of Indiana (JASI)

Founded in 1988 by community, business and academic leaders, the [Japan-America Society of Indiana](http://www.japanindiana.org) (JASI) is a not-for-profit cultural, educational, and business-support organization which serves as a bridge of friendship and cooperation between the people of Indiana and Japan. The Society is supported by a diverse membership of businesses, communities, academic institutions, families and individuals. Annually, the Japan-America Society of Indiana reaches more than 10,000 individuals through its programs, outreach activities, and services. The Japan-America

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