

Japan External Trade Organization

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JETRO Chicago Midwest NEWSLETTER

Illinois • Indiana • Iowa • Kansas • Michigan • Minnesota • Missouri • Nebraska • North Dakota • Ohio • South Dakota • Wisconsin

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JETRO Brings Japan Back to BIO Convention, June 4-7

JETRO returned to the annual BIO International Convention, June 4-7, 2018 in Boston, Massachusetts. It was JETRO's 16th participation in this leading international event since 2003.

Exhibitors at the Japan Pavilion, in such fields as biopharmaceuticals, diagnostics and regenerative medicine, presented their leading-edge technologies, products and services on this key global stage, and look forward to active business talks with prospective partners.

The Japan Pavilion featured a business corner where visitors took part in one-on-one meetings with exhibitors and utilized other business support and services. Panels introducing Japan's biotech industry were also on display in the pavilion.

The BIO International Convention is hosted by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO). BIO represents more than 1,100 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations. BIO members are involved in the research and development of innovative healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products.

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Four Hundred Thousand, Six Hundred



From the Chief Executive Director

Ralph Inforzato
Chief Executive Director,
JETRO Chicago

In 2015, total employment by Japanese manufacturing companies in the United States amounted to 400,600 employees, a peak figure and the largest by any foreign country investing the country. This is an increase of 110,200 (+38%) from 2010. That is the fundamental point that I'm making to the Midwest communities – it's an astounding jobs number that few recognize and of which many simply are unaware. And Japanese companies located in the United States have indicated that they do intend to expand – their primary concern is recruiting new American workers and the costs involved in their recruitment. Again, there were 400,600 Americans employed by Japanese manufacturing companies in 2015.

So it is important that the thought-leadership of the Midwest is recently so focused on job creation and training, supporting company retention and expansion, the great value that Japanese companies have in their region and how the local and state leadership can best support them. As much as I have spoken on these topics during the last three months, I have listened with greater intent and focus. People from our Heartland want to talk; they are freely sharing their opinions, especially on workforce-related issues and how JETRO may be able to assist their local communities in working a bit closer with their respective Japanese businesses.

The single best regional dialogue that I have attended in the Midwest was the recent Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit, which was organized by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership under the leadership of its President and CEO, John Sampson, in February. There were focused, on-site tours of cutting edge human resource training programs utilized by local Japanese affiliated companies, like Oji Intertech and

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Japan-Ohio Relationship Rooted in Business, Culture and Tradition



Guest View

John Minor
President & Chief
Investment Officer
JobsOhio

Ohio and Japan have a long tradition of partnership and investment, beginning with Ohio-born President Taft and his wife planting cherry trees in Washington, D.C. after a trip to Japan in 1905. Since that time, this investment relationship has grown to be a tremendous benefit to both the people of Japan and Ohio.

With approximately 900 establishments that employ nearly 80,000 people, Japan is the largest international investor in Ohio. Ohio is a

destination for Japan-based companies launching and expanding businesses due to a friendly business climate that fosters growth and profitability, an established infrastructure that allows for cost-effective logistics, and a high quality of life that attracts and retains millennial talent.

An annual survey by the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit shows total employment by Japan-based companies has grown 36 percent in Ohio since the great recession, and 98

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On Tuesday, May 8, JETRO Chicago's Ralph Inforzato was welcomed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder at the Consular Corp reception held at the Governor's official residence.



On March 19, Radius Indiana, a regional partnership representing eight counties in Southwest Central Indiana, held an event in French Lick, Indiana.

JETRO Chicago's Ralph Inforzato addressed the attendees, speaking on "The Transformational Economic Dynamics of Japanese Investment in the United States."

Above right, Ralph Inforzato is with Naoki Ito, Consul-General of Japan in Chicago; Becky Skillman, Chair, Radius Indiana; and Jeff Quyle, President & CEO, Radius Indiana.



The Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) Delegation visited Lincoln, Nebraska on Thursday, May 3.

(Left) During the visit, Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts greeted Ralph Inforzato.



(Above) Ralph Inforzato also had a chance to meet Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale.



The Keidanren Delegation visited the Nebraska State Capitol on May 3. (Above) Ralph Inforzato; Haruo Murase, Chairman, Canon Marketing Japan Inc.; Governor Pete Ricketts; Shigeru Hayakawa, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, Toyota Motor Corporation.

(Below) The Keidanren Delegation toured Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing in Lincoln, NE.

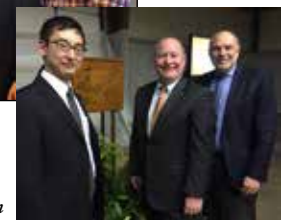


On May 4, JETRO Chicago's Ralph Inforzato and Tsubasa Hashimoto headed to southern Illinois where they met with City of Effingham, IL leadership including Mayor Jeff P. Bloemker (third from left).

On March 20, a ribbon cutting ceremony at M&C Tech Indiana, a manufacturer of plastic parts for the automotive industry, celebrated the company's opening of its new facility in Washington, Indiana. (Photo below). Dignitaries attending the event included (from left), Joe Wellman, Mayor of Washington, IN; Eric Holcomb, Governor, State of Indiana; Naoki Ito, Consul-General, Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago; and Ralph Inforzato, Chief Executive Director, JETRO Chicago.



On an April 30 visit to Tell City, Indiana, JETRO Chicago's Ralph Inforzato and Tsubasa Hashimoto met with Mayor Jim Adams (second from left) and Lee Chestnut, president of the Perry County Development Corp.



Also while in Tell City Tsubasa Hashimoto and Ralph Inforzato met with Larry Bucshon, Indiana 8th Congressional District.

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International Business Relations Highlighted at Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit



Guest View

Sarah Rodriguez
Director of Business Development, Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership

“Growing jobs, growing people,” a statement given by Secretary Jim Schellinger during the Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit that was held at the Grand Wayne Center on February 16 in Northeast Indiana.

At the event, government, community and business leaders learned about Japan-Indiana business relations from industry experts representing Japan, the State of Indiana, local government and economic development organizations.

Secretary Schellinger explained how Indiana is a pro-business, pro-growth state which is appealing to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Rightfully so, the Japanese have viewed Indiana as a strong investment state for many years with over 280 Japanese-owned businesses operating within the Hoosier borders. Japan is Indiana’s strongest FDI partner. Japanese companies have 24 locations in 10 counties in Northeast Indiana, employing thousands of people.

Tasked by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consul-General Naoki Ito created a grassroots caravan to visit locations within his 10-state territory. The strategy of bringing together Japanese-owned business leaders and local decision makers within Northeast Indiana proved to be successful through the summit’s over 70 attendees.

Topics during the summit included:

- Indiana’s remarkable AAA credit rating and hard-sought after low tax rates

- Japan’s increased interest in investing in Indiana (specifically Northeast Indiana)
- Examples of Japanese-owned companies thriving in Northeast Indiana
- Awareness for skilled, talented workforce
- Network of support from organizations such as Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and Japan-America Society of Indiana (JASI).

The event closed with a networking reception during which many attendees met with leaders from the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, JETRO, JASI, Japanese-owned company executives and economic development organizations.

So, what’s next for Northeast Indiana’s critical relationship with Japan? Next steps include conversations that directly relate to the growth of Japanese businesses in Northeast Indiana. This includes increased marketing of Indiana’s pro-business climate, connections with the region’s higher education institutions and increased support for Japanese cultural activities.

With collaboration from the key partners, we are planning the 2019 Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit. Plans include breakout sessions on the following topics:

- Economic trends
- Investment between Japan and Indiana
- Workforce development for Japanese owned companies
- Cultural and educational attributes

For more information regarding the 2019 Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit, please contact Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership’s Director of Business Development Sarah Rodriguez at sarah@neindiana.com or 260-469-3463.

Japan Pavilion Featured 12 Exhibitors at Home & Housewares Show

For the seventh time JETRO organized the Japan Pavilion at the International Home and Housewares Show (IH+HS), at Chicago’s McCormick Place from March 10-13, 2018. There were 12 companies exhibiting in two pavilions, one in the North Hall and one in the South Hall. Five of the 12 companies exhibited at IH+HS for the first time. Each exhibitor showcased the highest quality of “Made in Japan” items that were design focused, smart, and eco-friendly. Products included quality kitchenware, environmentally friendly wooden products, user-friendly cleaning tools and more. Advanced Japanese technology is applied to bring you eco-friendly, stylish, smart gadgets and housewares.

The International Home + Housewares Show is the world’s premier housewares marketplace. This year’s show featured 2,244 exhibitors from 47 countries, and more than 60,000 attendees from over 125 countries around the world.



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Chicago and Columbus Programs Update Tohoku Recovery

In March, JETRO Chicago, along with other sponsoring organizations, presented Tohoku Updates in both Chicago, IL and Columbus, OH. Since 2012, this annual program has focused on the pace of recovery and the challenges that the Tohoku region has faced since The Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. The program features authentic voices from Tohoku, the northeast region of Japan. These voices are from Japanese and Americans who are contributing to the recovery; who explain what their experiences have been and what their future expectations are for their region. This year's program was titled, "What's Being Done to Build a Positive Future - First-Hand Insights on the Current Progress."

This year, the program incorporated "A Taste of Tohoku," featuring an opportunity to sample Sake and food from the Tohoku region.

On Monday, March 12, the Chicago program at the Chicago Cultural Center was presented by JETRO, the Osaka Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International, the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, Japan America Society of Chicago, and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Chicago.



Naoki Ito



Ralph Inforzato

Hon. Naoki Ito, Consul-General of Japan in Chicago, and Ralph Inforzato, Chief Executive Director, JETRO Chicago provided remarks to open the program. Yoshiyuki Takasago, Director-General for International Affairs, Bureau and Tourism Commerce, Industry and Tourism Department, Miyagi Prefecture Government addressed the gathering, and shared his insights on the recovery and discussed the many business opportunities available in Miyagi Prefecture.

Next up was Yasushi Kotouno, Executive Officer of Suenaga Kaisan Company Ltd., a family owned seafood company in Miyagi, Japan. Since The Great East Japan Earthquake, he has devoted his time and effort to rebuilding Suenaga Kaisan and the seafood industry in Miyagi. Mr. Kotouno founded a group alliance of six seafood companies to jointly export their seafood products globally.



Yoshiyuki Takasago



Yasushi Kotouno



Toko Shiiki

The final presentation was by Toko Shiiki, a photographer and filmmaker. She lived and learned in Tokyo for most of her life, before moving to Michigan in 2005, to study photography. After graduation, she won multiple photography awards, like The International Photography Awards, for her personal work, and she became a freelance photographer. This led to her current fascination with documentary filmmaking, as a vehicle for sharing the stories and storytelling of unique individuals. *Threshold: Whispers of Fukushima* is her first feature length film.

At the reception following the presentation, guests were able enjoy some of the tastes of the Tohoku region, including Sakes and various foods.

On Wednesday, March 14, a similar program was held in Columbus, OH, presented by JETRO and the Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO). Opening remarks were delivered by David W. Cook, Honorary Consul of Japan in Ohio and Ralph Inforzato of JETRO Chicago.

Mr. Takasago and Mr. Kotouno followed with their presentations.



John Gauntner



David W. Cook



Yoshiyuki Takasago

The final presentation in Columbus featured Sake expert John Gauntner, known as the "Sake Samurai." He shared his experience with Fukushima Sake breweries and the people of Fukushima.



Chicago attendees enjoy the post-event reception and networking, while sampling food and Sake from the Tohoku region.

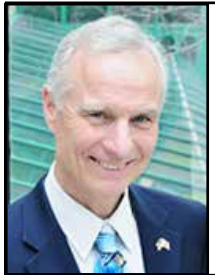


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Japan America Society of Minnesota Executive Director Shares Memories as Retirement Approaches



Guest View

Ben van Lierop
 Executive Director,
 Japan America
 Society of Minnesota
 (JASM)

Ben van Lierop, Executive Director of the Japan America Society of Minnesota (JASM), and a dear friend of JETRO Chicago's will be retiring at the end of June. Having held this position since 2006, he reflects on his time

at JASM and shares his insight on the future of the association as it continues to encourage and facilitate intercultural exchange.

I have been very fortunate at JASM to be engaged in activities, plan events and work with people who also want to serve as “bridges between cultures.” This has been the best and most fulfilling job of my career. I will miss the J-Quiz program, where I have seen the excitement of high school students who are learning Japanese language compete in the exciting J-Quiz competition. I believe these high school students will become the future Japan experts and dedicated leaders with an international perspective. I have enjoyed working with JASM volunteers, especially at the Obon Festival where hundreds of families come to the JASM booths to participate in traditional Japanese festival activities and learn more about Japan. In addition, I have been inspired and humbled by the generous support of many individuals and corporate members who have contributed financially to JASM through the annual Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala. The growing financial support from this gala has enabled JASM to give four scholarships for the past two years. It had also provided support for other JASM programs. In addition, generous private donors are helping JASM to establish an endowment which will enable JASM to grow even stronger in the future.

I want to express enormous thanks to former Vice President and Ambassador Walter Mondale, the JASM Honorary Chairman. As you probably know, Mr. Mondale continually expresses his personal pride in and affection for JASM. In my work for JASM, I have been deeply impressed by Mr. Mondale's love of Japan, his desire to always learn from others by asking questions, his active listening style and his quick wit.

I feel fortunate that as the Executive Director I have been able to work with a wonderful group of colleagues who have supported my passion for building bridges between Japan and Minnesota. It has been a good run, and I am thankful for the opportunity that I have been given to serve as a leader of this vibrant and exciting organization.

I have mixed feelings. I am looking forward to being able to spend more time with my family in Minnesota and with my family in Japan. I would also like to be involved in some new activities around my lifelong interests in Japan and Korea. I would also like to do some volunteer work, such as tutoring in Northeast Minneapolis, and to continue to pursue my hobbies. I love running, biking and singing in our church choir. However, I naturally also feel some sense of loss when I consider leaving the work I have enjoyed as a leader of JASM since 2006.

At the same time, I am encouraged and inspired by the leadership of Marc Blehert and the current members of the JASM Board who have chosen Rio Saito to become the next Executive Director of JASM. Everyone who has worked with Rio knows that she has great energy, a deep passion for the mission of JASM and many creative ideas for leading JASM in the future. I intend to be active as a member of JASM and support the efforts of Rio and her team as they encounter opportunities and share in the new challenges that come their way in serving the Japan America Society of Minnesota.

I will be leaving my role with heartfelt gratitude.

BIO ... from page 1

Here is a listing of the exhibitors that participated in this year's Japan Pavilion at BIO 2018. Watch for photos in the next issue of the JETRO Chicago Midwest Newsletter.

Beacle, Inc.	http://beacle.com/english/
BioComo Inc.	http://www.biocomo.jp/
Braizon Therapeutics, Inc.	http://www.braizon.com
BrightPath Biotherapeutics Co., Ltd.	http://www.brightpathbio.com/english/index.html
Cell Seed Inc.	https://www.cellseed.com/index-e.html
chromocenter Inc.	http://www.chromocenter.com/
Gene Techno Science Co., Ltd.	http://www.g-gts.com/en/
GlycoTechnica Ltd.	http://www.glycotechnica.com/english/
Hamamatsu Pharma Research, Inc.	http://www.hpharmausa.com
ID Pharma Co., Ltd.	http://www.dnavec.co.jp/en/index.html
iHeart Japan Corporation	http://www.iheartjapan.jp/en/
iPS Academia Japan, Inc.	http://ips-cell.net/e/
Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED)	http://www.amed.go.jp/en/

Japan Institute for the Control of Aging (JaICA)	http://www.jaica.com/e/index.html
M Bio Technology Inc.	http://www.mbiotech.org/English/company4.html
NB Health Laboratory Co. Ltd.	http://www.nbhl.co.jp/
NRL Pharma, Inc.	http://www.nrl-pharma.co.jp/
Okinawa Protein Tomography Ltd.	http://www.okinawa-pt.com/english2.html
Oncolys BioPharma Inc	http://www.oncolys.com/en/
POLA PHARMA INC.	https://www.pola-pharma.co.jp/en/index.html
RICOH COMPANY, LTD.	https://www.ricoh.com/
SHIGA INTERNATIONAL PATENT OFFICE	http://www.shigapatent.com/
SHIN NIPPON BIOMEDICAL LABORATORIES, LTD. (SNBL Japan)	http://www.snbljapan.com/
Sinfonia Technology Co., Ltd.	http://www.sinfo-t.jp/eng/index_a.htm
Summit Pharmaceuticals International Corporation	https://www.summitpharma.co.jp/english/index.html

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JETRO Works to Promote Sake Throughout the U.S.

JETRO's work to promote the sales and consumption of Japanese Sake is continuing and expanding through the United States.

The United States is still ranked number one by holding one-third of the importation of Sake in the world. In 2017, there was a 16% increase from 2016, from 800 million yen to 6 billion yen. When looking at Japan's exports to the U.S., Sake comes in second after yellowtail fish. Sake is particularly popular in Chicago and the Midwest region, where some say that as a whole, Sake is growing more than 20%.

To further increase consumption, it is necessary to get into the non-Japanese mainstream markets. In order to do so, it is important for consumers, restaurant/bar personnel, and retailers who compose the target market to understand the taste, experience and narrative of Sake. From this perspective, we've hosted JETRO's Japanese Sake Seminars in seven cities: Seattle, Portland, Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, Indianapolis and Columbus (OH) in the U.S., and Ottawa in Canada, just last March. These

markets have the potential of increasing Sake demand comparable to the growth of Chicago.

In all eight cities combined, we had 200 industry attendees. The goal of our educational seminars is to ensure for the long term that our growing industry network can continue to obtain an in-depth understanding of Sake. We also saw some short term results. For example, we received comments from wholesalers such as "Sake order doubled," and "Received order from customer who hadn't ordered for a while." We believe that Sake is still relatively unknown, and once discovered we are confident that its consumption and sales will increase in the U.S. We believe that continuing the seminars will increase ordering and consumption at restaurants and retail establishments.

Also, to promote and increase the overall demand of Sake, we plan to attend consumer events in the Chicago area, such as Chicago Gourmet in 2018. We are confident that sales of Sake have increased because of its enhanced visibility in the market.

Japanese Flavors Fill the Japan Pavilion at the 2018 National Restaurant Show

In a major step to bring Japanese food and beverages to the world's buyers, JETRO Chicago hosted its first-ever Japan Pavilion at the largest restaurant show in the U.S., the National Restaurant Association Show (NRA Show). The Show was held May 19 – 22 in Chicago's McCormick Place with more than 2,300 exhibitors and 65,000 foodservice professionals from 110 countries in attendance. The hugely popular Japan Pavilion was created with nineteen booths exhibiting a diverse array of authentic Japanese food and ingredients. See more about them at <https://www.jetro.go.jp/usa/topics/japan-pavilion-national-restaurant-association-show-2018.html>.

In addition, each day some of Chicago's top chefs prepared their own unique dishes at the Pavilion to demonstrate using some of the products in non-Japanese recipes. Showing such versatility of Japanese ingredients is one of JETRO's aims and the renowned chefs' delicious results clearly proved this to the food industry audience.

"It was so successful," some exhibitors said. The Japan Pavilion gave its exhibitors valuable access to global importers, distributors, retailers, restaurant and foodservice professionals and media who help shape consumers' tastes, making it a success for all involved.

Exhibitors at the Japan Pavilion at 2018 NRA Show

KAIJIN TRADING CO., LTD.	www.kaijin.co.jp
SANWA FOODS CO.,LTD	www.sanwafoods.co.jp
BANJO FOODS CO., LTD.	www.banjo.co.jp/en
MUSO CO., LTD. (JAPAN GOLD USA)	www.japangoldusa.com
OHYAMA FOODS CO.,LTD	www.ohyamafoods.co.jp
SHINMEI CO., LTD.	www.akafuji.co.jp/export/outline.html
KASHIWAZAKI SEIKA CO., LTD.	www.aomori96229.jp
SHIBATA BREWERY CO., LTD.	www.kounotsukasa.co.jp
AKASHI SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	www.akashi-tai.com
TRUE WORLD JAPAN, INC.	www.trueworld-jp.com
OTSUBO SUISAN CO.LTD	www.otsubo-suisan.co.jp
MITSUBOSHI BOEKI LIMITED	www.mitsuboshi-boeki.co.jp
SA JAPANESE GREEN TEA (SUGIMOTO AMERICA)	www.sugimotousa.com
SHIMADAYA INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION	www.shimadaya.co.jp
ST.COUSAIR CO., LTD.	www.stcousair-oregon.com
MOMIKI INC.,	www.momiki.com
YAMADAI FOOD CORPORATION	www.yamadai.jp/eng
KANEFUKU USA, INC.	www.kanefuku.co.jp
MOCHICREAM JAPAN CO., LTD	www.mochicream.com



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percent of jobs at Japanese businesses are held by local Ohio residents. Japanese companies continue to invest in Ohio and have made significant contributions to Ohio communities:

- Honda employs almost 14,000 Ohioans, and is the largest overseas source of jobs in Ohio.
- In 2017, Japan-based Topre America has committed to invest over \$130 Million, adding nearly 300 jobs.
- Job creation and growth by Japanese companies in Ohio is the highest compared to any other state in the Midwest region.

Beyond investment, Ohio and Japan share a unique relationship with the designation of the Saitama Prefecture as Ohio's sister-state in Japan, generating positive economic, cultural and technological exchange. The Ohio-Saitama University scholarship program enables students from Japan and Ohio to study, work and live in each state during a semester of school and encourages additional Japanese investment with nine Saitama-based companies with operations in Ohio.

With more than 13,500 Japanese nationals residing in Ohio, there is continuous opportunity for ongoing cultural exchange to further benefit long-term cooperations and investment opportunities.

Ohio and Japan have been linked for more than a century, and our growing investment relationship continues to benefit us on both sides of the globe. We want to continue to be part of your success. Invest in Ohio, and make Ohio home.



Governor John R. Kasich and JobsOhio host a delegation from Japan in October 2017.

JETRO Releases Results of Survey on the International Operations of Japanese Firms

In March 2018, JETRO released the results of its Survey on the International Operations of Japanese Firms, for fiscal year 2017.

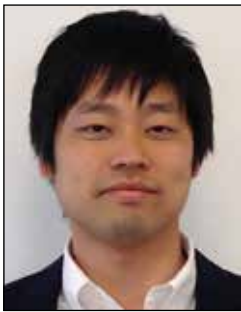
From November 2017 through January 2018, JETRO conducted a survey of Japanese firms that use JETRO's services to gauge their interest in business overseas. The survey received valid replies from 3,195 firms out of 9,981 (a 32% response rate), of which 2,591 were small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It covers topics including trade and overseas investment activities, the business environment of foreign countries, utilization of free trade agreements (FTAs), the utilization of foreign personnel, utilization of digital technologies and so on.

Some key points of the results include:

- Motivation to expand exports remains high, though is showing signs of leveling off. Domestic business expansion exceeds 60% for first time.
- Motivation to expand business in Vietnam shows growth for third consecutive year, currently ranking second after China.
- IoT (Internet of Things) is the most influential digital technology for large firms, EC (electronic commerce) for SMEs. EC is most widely used for overseas business.
- About half of firms employ foreign staff. Growing need for foreign executives is expected in the medium to long term.

More information on the survey and the results can be found at <https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/news/releases/2018/86aedef1557c1864.html>.

Welcome Hiroki Nihei



JETRO Chicago is pleased to welcome Hiroki Nihei as the new Program Coordinator, Research & Promotion/Agriculture Department.

Mr. Nihei is a native of Ibaraki-prefecture where Tsukuba Science City is located. He graduated from Rikkyo University with a degree in law. Mr. Nihei joined Ibaraki prefectural government in 2008 and was assigned to the Municipal

Support Division and Local Revitalization Division, where he assisted the local government and companies as they worked to resolve the population decline problem. From 2017, he served as a researcher for JETRO Tokyo's Overseas Research Department. Contact Mr. Nihei at Hiroki_Nihei@jetro.go.jp.

Contact JETRO Chicago • www.jetro.go.jp/usa/



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For general information, call the number above.

The JETRO Chicago team offers a wide variety of business support services for companies in the Midwest planning to initiate a business presence or seeking to add to their existing investment in Japan, and/or work with Japanese companies. Please feel free to contact us.

Tsubasa Hashimoto, Director of Public Affairs, tsubasa_hashimoto@jetro.go.jp

Akira Kawachi, Director of Business Development, akira_kawachi@jetro.go.jp

Kevin Kalb, Robotics, automotive and manufacturing inquiries, kevin_kalb@jetro.go.jp

Cathleen Moore, Food, tea and Sake exports from Japan inquiries, cathleen_moore@jetro.go.jp

Stephen Vullo, Industrial machinery exports from Japan inquiries, stephen_vullo@jetro.go.jp

Moeko Otsuchi, Business Development Representative, moeko_otsuchi@jetro.go.jp

Matt Feagley, Biotechnology & life science inquiries, Matt_Feagley@jetro.go.jp

Madeline Anderson, Business Development Representative, Madeline_Anderson@jetro.go.jp

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Kyocera SGS Precision Tool, as well as talk-through meetings on Japan and workforce development guidance with the leadership of Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne. All of this was followed by a public forum organized by the Regional Partnership in Fort Wayne. Each meeting and interaction I had was a valuable, enlightening experience. As a result of this Summit, I believe we at JETRO will become more active in workforce development for Japanese affiliates in the Midwest. For example, to focus on the tier one and tier two Japanese companies in the automotive supply chain, perhaps we at JETRO can play the role of an employment connector for human resources and act as a liaison with the states' and counties' jobs training assistance programs. I'm grateful to the Northeast Indiana Partnership's John Sampson, Chad Ruston and Sarah Rodriguez for showing me their region's economic needs and how JETRO may be able to develop a project in their business community. The experience of this Summit actually did begin a dialogue and is driving our thinking.

I do not want to remain static, standing back to simply observe the challenge of workforce development; we need to move forward, even in small steps. We may have actually come upon an idea while attending Japan economic and workforce discussions with the leadership in southern Illinois organized in the City of Effingham, Illinois by Craig Nielson, and in the City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois by Jonathon Hallberg, both respective economic development leaders.

During these discussions, the idea to support Japan Career Day programs and tours of local Japanese manufacturers in southern Illinois was offered by Terry Wilkerson, President, Rend Lake College, (Ina, IL) and James Hull, Ph.D., Vice President for Workforce Solutions at Lake Land College (Matoon, IL). President Wilkerson said, "We have to re-brand manufacturing as it's no longer dirty and dangerous. It is actually clean and safe. The local community needs to understand." James Hull told me that he organized Lake Land College's first Manufacturing Day last October to an overwhelming turn-out by students and parents. His guidance to me was that a separate Japan Career day experience may be successful. A Japan Career Day would allow JETRO to play the role of an employment enabler with the goal of assisting qualified graduates from high schools and local colleges to actually discover and connect with local Japanese companies.

Japanese companies and JETRO can surely contribute to a re-branding of manufacturing in the Midwest. I saw this firsthand as I was honored to attend the Opening Ceremony of M&C Tech Indiana, which is a Tier 2 automotive parts supplier and, importantly, the first Japanese company to establish its facility in Washington (IN). The company has a young workforce and I had the chance to speak with the company's managers and many of its associates. Each of M&C Tech's associates were actually hired in the autumn of 2017. I was impressed that each associate clearly articulated his or her job function and knew exactly where the extruded rubber parts that M&C Tech is producing were placed on the vehicle. A female M&C Tech associate in the quality control department told me, "I want my career to be here. I want M&C Tech to grow and I want this company to be successful." Her associates all had this same degree of motivation and enthusiasm for their work and for M&C Tech. I believe that a focused and energized American workforce combined with Japanese and American management and engineers will result in a lifetime of sustained manufacturing investment for the

City of Washington and Daviess County, Indiana. Incidentally, M&C Tech is already considering expanding their facility. This company is a very positive addition to this southeast region of Indiana and to the automotive supply chain.

More and more, the transition of current U.S. trade policy has also become an emotional issue for the Midwest business community. We at JETRO Chicago have taken quick action by organizing guidance-driven public programs in April and May to clearly explain the Section 232 import tariffs on Japanese aluminum and steel products. Japan is not an exempt country, therefore Japanese importers in the U.S. and the end-users of their products may apply to the U.S. Department of Commerce for product-by-product exclusions from the elevated U.S. import tariffs. It requires much time, work and energy to complete the application for an exclusion, but it must be done. We're happy to be of service to Japanese companies in the region and their end-users to provide them with clear and practical guidance on the 232 aluminum and steel tariffs. Actually, there is a sense of confusion and a bit of frustration from the community regarding these particular U.S. import tariffs. One Indianapolis attendee voiced his concern when he said, "Japan's imported specialty steel is such that it is not made in the United States, so why does it have to be hit with a 25% import tariff?" He's right, of course. We'll likely hear more of these comments as the Section 232 process continues. U.S. trade policy is in transition, but please know, we'll move with speed to understand the changes in U.S. trade policies and convey them to our business communities throughout the Midwest. And, importantly, please remember the number of 400,600 employees which is, again, the total employment of Americans by Japanese manufacturing companies in 2015. It's this number that we wish to grow, thereby strengthening the U.S.-Japan economic relationship.



Takabiro Takahashi, Director of Industrial Machinery at JETRO Chicago, speaks at the Section 232 Public Forum on April 12, Chicago, IL.

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, in collaboration with the office of the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, JETRO, and JTL America, Inc., hosted the Japan-Northeast Indiana Summit, in Fort Wayne on February 16. Pictured above, are Ralph Inforzato and Tsubasa Hashimoto, JETRO Chicago, with Tom Henry, Mayor of Fort Wayne, IN.

