

POLITICAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

The promotion of close relations between Japanese leaders and their overseas counterparts through political exchange has been a centerpiece of JCIE's programs since its inception. In 1968, JCIE's first US-Japan Political Exchange Program brought eight US Congressional members to Tokyo for an unprecedented series of meetings and discussions with leading Japanese political and social figures. Over the years, JCIE has expanded its political exchange programs to include exchanges for young political leaders from Japan and the United States (since 1973), senior US Congressional staff (since 1982), and young Australian and Japanese political leaders (since 1991). In the ensuing years, more than 1,000 political leaders have taken part in one or more of JCIE's exchanges.

The increasing complexity and interconnectedness of the international and domestic environment has made dialogue between international leaders all the more imperative, and JCIE has worked to expand the breadth and depth of political exchange. For example, as bilateral relations between Japan and its partner countries have matured, JCIE has also increasingly emphasized discussions of issues of common concern during its exchanges, such as climate change, IT policy, and global health. As its network of program alumni has grown, JCIE has worked to engage these individuals in other areas of our programs, such as the Friends of the Global Fund, Japan; bilateral dialogues such as the UK-Japan, Korea-Japan, and Japanese-German forums; and various policy studies.



US-Japan Parliamentary Exchange Program

Established in 1968, the US-Japan Parliamentary Exchange Program is the longest-running exchange between members of the US Congress and the Japanese Diet. This nongovernmental, nonpartisan program has brought more than 270 members of the US Congress and Japanese Diet to one another's countries for a series of intensive dialogues with leaders from a broad range of fields. It is designed to enhance dialogue between American and Japanese political leaders on bilateral and global policy issues and strengthen bilateral cooperation on issues of shared concern.

In February 2011, right before the start of FY2011, six Congressional members visited Japan as part of the program to participate in the New Shimoda Conference. Since then, however, Congressional and Diet visits have been hampered by the aftermath of the 3/11 disaster and by electoral politics in both countries.

Nonetheless, on April 7, 2011, less than four weeks after the disaster, JCIE and the US-Japan Council

co-sponsored a roundtable on Capitol Hill with seven US Congressional members, a delegation of Japanese leaders, and experts on US-Japan relations from both countries. This was organized as a follow-up to the New Shimoda Conference, and discussions centered on ways to strengthen US-Japan relations in light of Asia's shifting balance of power, steps to create a more robust and meaningful partnership between the two countries, and ways that the United States can support Japan in responding to the devastating earthquake and tsunami that occurred just 17 days after the New Shimoda Conference.

As FY2012 drew to an end, preparations were well underway for a visit by a bipartisan delegation of Diet members that took place in April–May of 2013, during which up-and-coming Diet members joined with young Japanese policy experts for a visit to Washington DC. Delegation members spoke at the Tadashi Yamamoto Memorial Seminar at the Council on Foreign Relations and met with dozens of policy experts, analysts, and government officials.



Senator Jim Webb (left) and Representative Diana DeGette (right) address the 2011 New Shimoda Conference

US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program

Since 1973, JCIE has partnered with the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) to operate the US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program. With support from the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, this intensive two-week study program exposes young leaders from each country to the politics and policymaking of the other country, enhances their understanding and appreciation of US-Japan relations, and creates personal networks among the two nations' leaders. In addition to visiting the host nation's capital for meetings with national leaders, participants travel to at least two additional cities to gain a more diverse perspective.

During the course of the program, delegates meet with a wide range of senior government officials, political party representatives, corporate executives, and community leaders. American delegates typically include state and local elected officials as well as party staff, and efforts are made to select equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans each year. The Japanese delegates primarily consist of prefectural and local elected officials from the major ruling and opposition parties, as well as Diet staffers.

28th US Delegation to Japan

The 28th US delegation of the US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program arrived in Japan on September 24, 2011, for a two-week study tour. Over the course of the trip, the group met with nine Diet members from different political parties, including Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Sadakazu Tanigaki and Muneaki Murai, chairman of the Democratic Party (DPJ) Special Committee on Disasters and a program alumnus. They also met with US Ambassador John Roos to hear his views on the current climate of US-Japan relations. The discussions with leading politicians were complemented by meetings with Japanese business leaders, journalists,

and diplomats, and the participants served as panelists in a public seminar on “American Perspectives on US Politics and Diplomacy.”

After Tokyo, the delegation continued on to Okayama, Hiroshima, Hyogo, and Kyoto. In Okayama, they met with the chairman of the LDP Diet Affairs Committee, Ichiro Aisawa, as well as with Governor Masahiro Ishii and members of the Prefectural Assembly. They then had a one-day visit to Hiroshima, where they visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and spoke with an atomic bomb survivor. In Hyogo, the delegation met with Vice Governor Kazuo Kanazawa and other prefectural leaders, as well as with DPJ Youth Division members and labor union members from Daihatsu Motors. In addition, they learned about Japanese disaster management strategies at the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institute, and discussed organized crime at the Hyogo Prefectural Police Headquarters. The trip concluded with a historical and cultural tour of Kyoto.



28th US Delegation learns calligraphy in Hyogo Prefecture

Participants

JENNIFER EPPERSON, *Legislative and Policy Counsel, North Carolina (Democrat)*

MICHAEL FRERICHS, *Member, Illinois Senate (Democrat)*

MALVINA GASCO, *Government Relations Manager, Boeing Company, Florida (Independent)*

MARC KASCHKE, *Mayor, City of North Platte, Nebraska (Republican)*

NOREEN OTTO, *Operations Director, Iowa House of Representatives Leadership Office (Republican)*

RYAN WILLIAMS, *Member, Tennessee House of Representatives (Republican)*

MIKE OPAT, *Delegation Escort; Commissioner, Hennepin County Board, Minnesota (Democrat)*

29th US Delegation to Japan

The 29th US delegation traveled to Japan on September 15–28, 2012. They began with a visit to Rikuzentakata, Ofunato, and Kamaishi, three of the cities hit hardest by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and the resultant tsunami. The delegates heard from local leaders and NGO representatives who are trying to chart the recovery of their communities, including representatives from the Kamaishi Social Welfare Council, Fuji Welfare Foundation, and Kamaishi Platform. The group also met with Mayor Takenori Noda of Kamaishi and Ofunato City Council Member Kenetsu Suzuki.

Next, the delegation traveled to Tokyo for a series of meetings and roundtables with journalists,



29th US Delegation visits an NPO working in temporary housing units in Ofunato

policy experts, and Diet members, including former Minister for Foreign Affairs Seiji Maehara and former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki. The delegates also spoke at a large public symposium on domestic politics and the US presidential election, and met with a number of officials at the United States Embassy, including Ambassador John Roos.

Afterwards, they visited Kumamoto, where Governor Ikuo Kabashima hosted a dinner for them, and they exchanged views with LDP Youth Division members of the Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly. In Nara, the delegates were guests at a local school and met with members of the Nara City Board of Education. Since Nara is known for its cultural legacy, the group also heard from those preserving its regional heritage, including a local architect, a tea ceremony master, and a museum director.

Participants

LING-LING CHANG, *Mayor, Diamond Bar, California (Republican)*

MEGAN ENGLAND, *Member, Roeland Park City Council, Kansas (Democrat)*

THAD INGE, *Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, US Small Business Administration (Democrat)*

JOHN KING, *Member, South Carolina House of Representatives (Democrat)*

JILLIAN MATUNDAN, *AFSCME Eastern Region Field Coordinator, AFSCME New York (Democrat)*

LAURIE SMALLING, *Delegation Escort; Senior Director Political Programs, Walmart (Independent)*

23rd Japanese Delegation to the United States

Six local legislators and Diet staff members visited Washington DC, Minnesota, and Colorado on July 16–29, 2011. They began their visit in Washington, where the delegation members were briefed on bilateral relations by State Department Director of Japanese Affairs Rust Deming and on campaigning by officials from the National Republican Congressional Committee.

In Minnesota, the delegates met with Supreme Court Associate Justice G. Barry Anderson and

several Minnesota state representatives, and discussed local politics at the St. Paul City Council and Minneapolis City Hall. The visit took place during intense state budget negotiations and a looming government shutdown, providing the delegates with a firsthand view into the US state-level political system.

The trip concluded in Colorado, where the delegation met with the Colorado City Council and other local leaders, including Colorado Springs Mayor Steve Bach and El Pomar Foundation chairman and CEO Bill Hyble. They also toured the US Air Force Academy, and they visited the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to learn about research conducted for the US Department of Energy on promising renewable energy sources. On their last day in Denver, the group met with Colorado Attorney General John W. Suthers and State Senator Ted Harvey to hear their views on Colorado state politics.

Participants

- HIDEKI AMEMIYA, *Leader, Organization Bureau; Vice Director, Youth Bureau (New Komeito Party)*
- SATOSHI ARAI, *Staff Member, Personnel Bureau, LDP Headquarters*
- KOICHIRO KOBAYASHI, *Member, Okayama Prefectural Assembly (LDP)*
- KENJIRO KOSHIDA, *Member, Hyogo Prefectural Assembly (DPJ)*
- NOBUKO NAKAMURA, *Member, Nakano City Assembly (DPJ)*
- KAORI TOSAKA, *Assistant to Member of the House of Representatives Chinami Nishimura (DPJ)*

24th Japanese Delegation to the United States

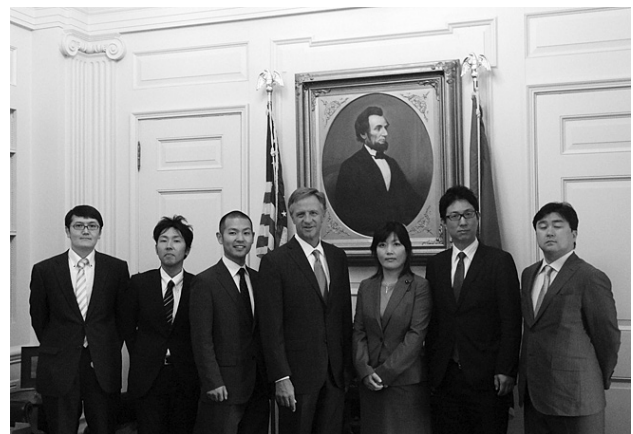
On April 28–May 11, 2012, six Japanese local legislators and political party staff members traveled to Washington DC and to the states of Tennessee and Washington. Given that the visit took place during the electoral primaries, while in Washington DC the group discussed US politics with leaders from the Democratic National Committee and the Young Republicans and Young Democrats of America. They also had a meeting on US foreign policy at the State Department, as well as other meetings on trade,

lobbying, and government communications. They met with a number of ACYPL alumni in the corporate and government sectors and spoke with Japanese Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki about the current state of US-Japan relations.

The delegation then traveled to Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee, where they explored the US state-level political system through meetings with a number of state officials and the mayor of Memphis and toured such cultural sites as the Civil Rights Museum. The group then departed for Spokane and Seattle, Washington, where they met with several Washington state representatives as well as the mayor of Spokane. In addition, the group discussed the role of think tanks in American policymaking at the Washington Policy Center in Seattle and visited the Port of Seattle, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Microsoft before returning to Japan.

Participants

- TAKAHIRO AKAGAWA, *Policy Secretary to Member of the House of Councillors Misako Yasui (DPJ)*
- KOTARO ISHIGE, *Councilman, Kodaira City (DPJ)*
- MATSUJI NAKAIZUMI, *Member, Akita Prefectural Assembly (LDP)*
- KENJI SHINOHARA, *Chief Clerk, Press System Department, Komei Shimbun (New Komeito)*
- YUMIKO URATA, *Member, Kumamoto Prefectural Assembly (LDP)*
- TAISHI YAYAMA, *Manager, Research Department, DPJ Headquarters*



24th Japanese Delegation with Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam

US Congressional Staff Exchange Program

JCIE established the US Congressional Staff Exchange Program in 1982 in recognition of the vital role that staff members play in legislative and policymaking processes. The one-week program provides senior Congressional staffers with the opportunity to meet a wide range of Japanese legislators, policymakers, and experts, thus giving them a sense of Japan's policymaking process and of recent trends in politics, economics, and foreign policy. Since its inception, over 150 staffers serving Congressional members from both parties have visited Japan on this program,

allowing them to bring a heightened understanding of US-Japan relations and the politics of Japanese policymaking back to their work in the US Congress. No staff exchange programs were held in FY2011–FY2012, but as of spring 2013, JCIE staff were busily preparing for the 22nd US Congressional Staff Exchange Program, which was held in August 2013. That program brought six senior Congressional staff to Japan for meetings, roundtables, and site visits related to US-Japan relations, regional affairs, and the state of recovery efforts in the devastated Tohoku region.