

# JCIE at 50: Pioneering US-Japan Political Exchange

Vol. 1 History

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Japan Center for International Exchange

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CHARLES E. MORRISON



## *Foreword*

THE YEAR 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE). Its predecessor was the Japan Council for International Understanding (JCIU), an organization engaged in projects concerned with US-Japan relations, such as the Japanese-American Assembly (Shimoda Conference) and US-Japan parliamentary exchange programs. In 1970, the decision was made to go independent and establish JCIE.

Given the historical backdrop, with no parent organization for financial support and as an independent, non-governmental body founded by an individual, sustaining international activities of this nature was an enormous challenge. Throughout our history, we have constantly assessed what needs to be done and the kinds of projects collaborators and funders seek, and it is thanks to the many staff who have identified with JCIE's cause and the many friends at home and abroad who have supported our work that JCIE has been able to drive towards its goals and celebrate its 50th anniversary.

When contemplating projects to mark this 50-year milestone in a meaningful way, it occurred to us that buried among our internal materials on US-Japan political and parliamentary exchange were countless documents that speak of JCIE's unique history. In 2018, we took our proposal to consolidate those extensive accomplishments as a 50th anniversary project to Junichi Chano, then Executive Director of the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) and received a grant to pursue it. Over many years, the CGP has supported JCIE on the US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program and provided various types of assistance for US-Japan intellectual exchange, regional exchange, political and parliamentary exchange, and surveys on US-Japan exchange in general. The survey research and reports on political and parliamentary exchange conducted in 1994 and 2017 are especially comprehensive, and there is no question that they served to strengthen JCIE. I would like to express my gratitude to the CGP for giving us those opportunities.

This report is not an objective one; rather it is intended to serve as a record of US-Japan political and parliamentary exchange and offer JCIE's perspective on how that exchange has impacted US-Japan relations. It has been compiled by Hideko Katsumata, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer who has engaged in a great many of JCIE's activities from the early days alongside founding president Tadashi Yamamoto, in collaboration with Dai Funaki, Program Officer for the US-Japan Young Political Leaders Exchange Program, and other JCIE staff members.

As an early advocate of the Shimoda Conference and US-Japan Congressional Exchange, Columbia University Professor Emeritus Gerald Curtis has been a great friend of JCIE, supporting countless projects since day one. He continues to contribute to both JCIE and JCIE/USA as a member of our board. Former East-West Center President Charles Morrison has

advised JCIE on congressional exchange since his days in the 1970s as a legislative aide for Senator William Roth before leading many intellectual and policy research projects in his role as a JCIE Research Fellow for several years in the 1980s. They have contributed personal reflections on the significance of JCIE's political and parliamentary exchange programs from their unique standpoints, and I wish to express my deepest gratitude to them both.

It is most unfortunate that through multiple office moves we have lost many materials produced before digital record-keeping began, necessitating a reckoning of several events from memory. Further, because of the lengthy nature of these materials, we have decided to produce two separate volumes: the first a "History Volume" and the second a "Reference Volume". The "Reference Volume" is currently in the editing phase with a planned publishing date in the near future.

It is my great hope that this report will be of assistance in future research on the history of US-Japan relations.

October 2020

Japan Center for International Exchange

President & Chief Executive Officer

Akio Okawara