

Japanese Government Awards the Japan-America Society of Tennessee

On July 25, 2011, the **Foreign Minister's Commendation** (*Gaimudaijin Hyosho Award*) was awarded to the **Japan-America Society of Tennessee** (JAST) by Mr. Takeaki Matsumoto, Foreign Minister of Japan. JAST is recognized for its contributions to the deepening of friendship between Japan and Tennessee, promoting cooperation through business, cultural, educational, and social programs.

The Foreign Minister's Certificate of Commendation was introduced in 1983 to honor those who have acted with distinction in the promotion of friendly relations with foreign countries and international cooperation. The annual conferment ceremony for the honor coincides with the anniversary of the establishment of Japan's Foreign Ministry, which was founded on July 8, 1869.

Established in 2000, JAST is dedicated to strengthening and sustaining favorable business and community relations between Japan and Tennessee. JAST unites Japanese and American interests through a diverse array of programs such as seminars, scholarships, community festivals, and cultural events. JAST hosted the 34th Annual Joint Meeting of the SEUS/Japan Association in October 2010, one of its most significant achievements in recent years. Serving as the secretariat of the State of Tennessee, JAST facilitated an extremely successful meeting for both Japanese businesses and also the member state delegations. JAST has also been the indispensable lead partner in organizing many Japanese cultural events, most notably the annual Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival and the annual Japanese Speech Contest.

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