



## **Establishment of the Japan History Council of New York**

We gather today at the Consulate General of Japan in New York to reflect on the development of the Japanese community in New York since the 19th century and to establish the Japan History Council of New York to collect, preserve, and disseminate historically significant material to the world and to pass it on to future generations.

1. The year 2020 marks the 160th anniversary of the first official Japanese delegation to the United States, the Man-en Gannen Official Envoy to the United States, led by Tokugawa Shogunate Ambassador Masaoki Shinmi, who visited New York on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1860. This was the beginning of the fertile friendship between Japan and New York.
2. On March 3, 1872, the Government of Japan appointed Tetsunosuke Tomita as Consul-to-be and the Consulate of Japan was established in New York. Since then, numerous Japanese have set footprints in New York. Countless individuals were active in a vast array of fields ranging from public service to business and art. Many became U.S. citizens and as Japanese Americans committed to building bridges between the United States and Japan. Many Japanese companies have established bases in New York to engage in global trade, strengthening economic relations and devoting themselves to the advancement of U.S.-Japan relations. In addition, there are significant Americans in New York who have made deep contributions to U.S.-Japan relations.

While some are well known having played an active role in New York and left their marks on its history, others are not as well-known or have passed away with unfulfilled dreams. Each life has a story and an impact on history.

3. All of these Japanese and Japanese Americans in New York have been instrumental in the enhancement of the deep and robust relationship between Japan and New York over these past 160 years. Looking back, despite countless regional wars, economic depressions, an American Civil War, Japanese Meiji Restoration, Global Spanish Flu Pandemic, and World Wars including being on opposing sides during the Pacific War, Japan and the U.S. have gone on to forge a strong alliance that has been the foundation of peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. In today's multi-layered, multi-faceted U.S.-Japan relationship, the close friendship and cooperation between Japan and New York is a source of pride to all of us.
4. It is our important mission to accurately preserve and systematize the history of the contributions and development of the Japanese community in New York to this day, to pass it on to future generations, and to disseminate throughout the United States, Japan, and the rest of the world.

To this end, the Japan History Council in New York will work with a wide range of interested parties to collect, organize, and preserve documents, photographs, footage, letters, and news reports related to the Japanese community here, in the areas of politics, diplomacy, business, medical science, culture, education, academia, art, music, and food related to Japan. At the same time, we will research and rediscover scattered and forgotten materials to compile an accurate record of the achievements, footprints and anecdotes of famous and long-forgotten individuals and organizations. These historical materials will be made widely available to the public using appropriate technical means. The end goal is to establish a Japanese History Museum in New York for the future.

Through these endeavors to rediscover and learn from this history, we hereby express our determination to enhance pride and unity in the Japanese community and contribute to further strengthening and deepening the friendship between Japan and New York and the relations between Japan and the U.S.

December 12, 2020

**Toshiko Akiyoshi**

*Composer and Pianist*

**Takeshi Furumoto**

*Veteran*

**Carol Gluck**

*Professor*

*Columbia University*

**Shunichi Homma**

*Professor, Colombia University*

*President, Japanese Medical Support Network*

**Daniel Inouye**

*Visiting Scholar*

*New York University*

**Kenji Kohno**

*Bureau Chief*

*NHK General Bureau for America*

**Masaaki Maeda**

*Vice President & Assistant Secretary*

*Nippon Club*

**Satoru Murase**

*Lawyer*

**Toru Okamoto**

*President / Principal*

*Japanese Children's Society, Inc*

**Susan J. Onuma**

*President*

*Japanese American Association of New York, Inc.*

**Hidenori Takaoka**

*President and CEO*

*Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas)*

**Joshua Walker**

*President*

*Japan Society*

**Bon Yagi**

*President*

*NY Japanese Restaurant Association*

**Robert T. Yanagisawa**

*President*

*Japanese Medical Society of America*

**Kanji Yamanouchi**

*Ambassador*

*Consulate General of Japan in New York*