

October 4, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Co-Chairs of the Grassroots Committee of the Japan America Society of Washington State (JASSW), we would like to welcome our guests from Japan to the upcoming 28th Japan America Grassroots Summit to be held in Washington State in September of 2018.

This Summit is a collaboration between the Center for International Exchange (CIE) and JASSW. While the CIE has partnered with many other Japan America Societies in the US, this will be the first time such a partnership will take place in Washington State. JASSW has a long history in our State dating back to its founding in 1923. Since its initial years, our Society has been active in promoting business, cultural, and mutual people-to-people understanding in our State. We have helped foster communities throughout the State to support and embrace all things associated with Japan. As a result, there are numerous Japanese companies that have operations in Washington, Washington-based US companies that operate in Japan, and community events throughout the year that help promote mutual understanding between Japan, the US and the State of Washington. Perhaps most telling is the number of sister-city relationships that exist throughout our State. It is this strong network of sister-cities that will be the backbone of this upcoming Grassroots Summit.

The Grassroots Program is unique. During your stay in Washington State, you will have the opportunity to see and experience many of our most significant attractions in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. In addition, the 3-day "home stay," in which a local family will host our guests from Japan in their homes and their respective communities, will be an unforgettable experience. Though these "home stays" are relatively brief, many of these experiences will grow into lasting life-long friendships that both guests and hosts will cherish. It is these lasting relationships at the people-to-people level that woven together will make up the fabric of a strong and mutually beneficial relationship between our two countries and the State of Washington.

We look forward to welcoming you to our great State of Washington. We are anxious to share our communities and our homes with our guests from Japan. We view this Grassroots Summit as a wonderful opportunity to further strengthen our ties with Japan and make many new friends. Until we meet in September 2018.

Sincerely,



Sharon Tomiko Santos
2018 Grassroots Summit Co-Chair
Representative
Washington State Legislature



Tay Yoshitani
2018 Grassroots Summit Co-Chair
Japan-America Society of the State of
Washington