

Remarks by the Consul General of Japan in Miami, Eiichi Kawahara,
At Reception for the 2012 Miami-Kagoshima Sister City Exchange
At the Official Residence of the Consulate General of Japan in Miami
November 13, 2012 at 18:30

Good evening. I am pleased to welcome you all to my house on this occasion. Time flies quickly. I remember the same reception on November last year with presence of Kagoshima City Mayor Mori, City Council Deputy Chairman Mr. Hirayama, and Kagoshima students with their host family.



鹿児島市の中学生の皆さん、ようこそ、お出で下さいました。早いもので昨年11月に鹿児島市の皆さんをお迎えして1年がたちました。昨年は、森市長さんや市議会副議長の平山さんもお越し頂きました。

My gratitude and appreciation goes to Sister City Exchange Committee, and above all, the committee leader Mr. Jose Fuentes. I always rely on your very warm support and networking for good hospitality for the visitors.

Wherever I go and meet people, I touch upon both Miami and Japan as very attractive tourist destinations.

According to the projection made by the Ministry of Transportation and Tourism of Japan, the number of Japanese visitors to the United States will be about 5 million this year. The number of Japanese visitors to Florida last year was about two hundred thousand. There are plenty of rooms for Miami or Florida to take advantage of this Japanese tourist flow to the United States. Miami offers lots of tourist destinations. Beautiful resorts, shopping centers, and very popular cruising trips to the Caribbean Sea.

Japan also offers a variety of tourist destinations. Floridians will be fascinated with the scenery and natural beauty, culture, tradition, history, and above all Japanese culinary. I would like to share with you the fact

that Japan is the country with more 3-Michelin Star Restaurants than any other country in 2011. I recommend Floridians to visit and enjoy excellent foods while they stay in Japan.

I am grateful to the citizens of Miami for showing their solidarity and support to Japan when northeastern part of Japan, Tohoku, was hit by the most devastating earthquake and tsunami on March 11 last year. I sincerely thank all for your sympathy and expression of solidarity.

The year 2012 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Gift of Japanese Cherry trees to United States. 3,020 Japanese cherry trees were sent in 1912 as gift from citizens of Tokyo to the citizen of Washington D.C.

In this connection, 100 young Cherry trees were planted in Pensacola Florida with support from University of West Florida and the citizens of Pensacola. DOS (Department of State) is going to reciprocate our Sakura gift with American dogwood flower.

Japan started new youth exchange project with the U.S. called "Kizuna". One thousand American high school students studying Japanese visited Japan for two weeks in either July or August this year. They went to the Tohoku region in the northern part of Japan, Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka. They spent two weeks in Japan under this project.

For this Kizuna Project, 23 students of Western High School in city of Davie were also invited to Japan this past July, and in March next year, a group of Japanese H/S students will visit Miami and Davie to reciprocate their call and promote mutual understandings.

2012年は、東京市民から米国ワシントン市民への桜寄贈から100周年目を迎え、フロリダ州でも北西部にあるペンサコーラで、西フロリダ大学及び市民のご支援を得て100本の桜植樹が行われました。米国務省から、お返しにハナミズキを日本に寄贈されております。

2012年から、キズナ・プロジェクトという新たな青少年交流プロジェクトを米国との間で開始しました。プロワード郡のデービー市のウエスタン高校 23 名が 7 月に日本を訪問、2 週間かけて東北地域をはじめ、各地を視察・交流を行いました。来春には、

東北の高校生の一団がマイアミ及びデービー市を訪問し、相互の理解を深める予定です。

The Sister City network focuses on promoting mutual understanding, friendship, and a sense of family between the two cities.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to you Mr. Jose Fuentes, Ms. Isabel de Quesada, and the members of the Miami-Kagoshima Sister City Exchange Committee and host families for your heart warming contributions. I am grateful for what you have done. Thanks to you, the Miami-Kagoshima relationship is so strong.

マイアミ市の姉妹都市委員会のメンバーの皆様やホストファミリーの皆様が、いろいろなところで、今回の鹿児島市中學生一行の受け入れに御尽力を頂いたことに対して、鹿児島市中學生の皆さんに代わって感謝の気持ちをお伝えしました。

中學生の皆さん、この滞在が、非常に有益な機会となるよう、しっかりと過ごして頂きたいと存じます。

Finally, the biggest recognition of all must go to these brave young girls.

I hope they find it fascinating to engaging in exchange activities, and make the most of this unique experience. I also hope that someday your Miami host brothers and sisters will have the chance to visit Kagoshima.

Thank you