

## MESSAGE FROM CONSUL-GENERAL SASAYAMA TAKUYA

October 2023

It's the time of year when we enjoy regularly scheduled annual events. On Sept. 30, Kampai Toronto 2023 was held at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre (JCCC). This marks the 11<sup>th</sup> time this event has been held, hosted by the Sake Institute of Ontario (SIO) which is a Toronto organization established to promote sake in Canada. More than 60 breweries offered 250 types of sake along with Japanese cuisine with which they pair well. There were approximately 600 people at the event, with the limited number of tickets completely sold out.



**Kampai Toronto 2023**

The Toronto Japan Job Fair 2023 also took place on Oct. 1 in a hotel in North York, the second time this event has been held. There were 20 companies and organizations present. Close to 530 students and other job seekers had registered ahead of time, and 300 were in attendance. This is an invaluable event for Japanese immigrants and students residing in Toronto, as well as the many students studying Japanese in Ontario who wish to work for a Japanese company.



**Toronto Job Fair 2023**

## 1. Next Stop: Japan, an *ekinaka* event in Toronto

The Greater Toronto Area has a population of over 7 million that is increasing by approximately 100,000 people annually, a truly remarkable metropolitan area among developed countries. Toronto is the third largest city in North America after New York and Los Angeles. Its size, combined with its rapid population growth, has made infrastructure and urban development acutely urgent issues for both the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario. Hitachi is participating in plans to open the Ontario Line, a new subway line which is part of the efforts to address these issues. Other Japanese companies have also shown strong interest in local infrastructure development.

Japan has a long history of forming communities around railways and train stations. In its “urban development centered on stations”, the rail system has played a major role in Japan’s modernization, especially with respect to regional communities. When we explain about Japan’s urban development methods which entails building such facilities as schools and hospitals in communities around train stations, key representatives of the Government of Ontario and the City of Toronto always show great interest. In Toronto, with its declining birth rate and aging population, the need to consider railway management that does not rely on fare income is apparent.

The Honourable Kinga Surma, Ontario’s Minister of Infrastructure, visited Japan in January of this year. She toured Yokohama Minato Mirai 21 and other sites to inspect Japan’s Transit Oriented Communities (TOC). As a guest of our National Day reception on February, the Minister said that her visit to Japan changed her life and that she hopes to improve infrastructure and urban development in Ontario using Japan as an example. She expressed her strong determination to tackle this issue seriously.

It is against this background that we will be holding Next Stop: Japan from Nov. 1 to 4 at Union Station, the gateway to Toronto. Given that this year marks the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary Japan-Canada diplomatic relations and that there are ongoing efforts to increase tourism to Japan, we are organizing this event to recreate the effective *ekinaka* (“inside the train station”) business model of Japan. At the same time, there will be a stage where various aspects of Japanese culture will be introduced. I hope this event will be one where those in attendance can experience authentic Japanese culture as well as Japan’s *ekinaka* environment.

Booths will be established on site where various goods that can be seen at typical Japanese train stations – including, fashion, crafts, bento boxes and sake – will be displayed and sold. The Consulate-General of Japan will co-organize this event with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), and the Japan Foundation, Toronto. Tourism information will also be available, and discount airline tickets to Japan and tote bags will be

distributed among a limited number of visitors. The LCBO outlet in the station will conduct food pairings with sake. Please drop by if you have time in your schedule.

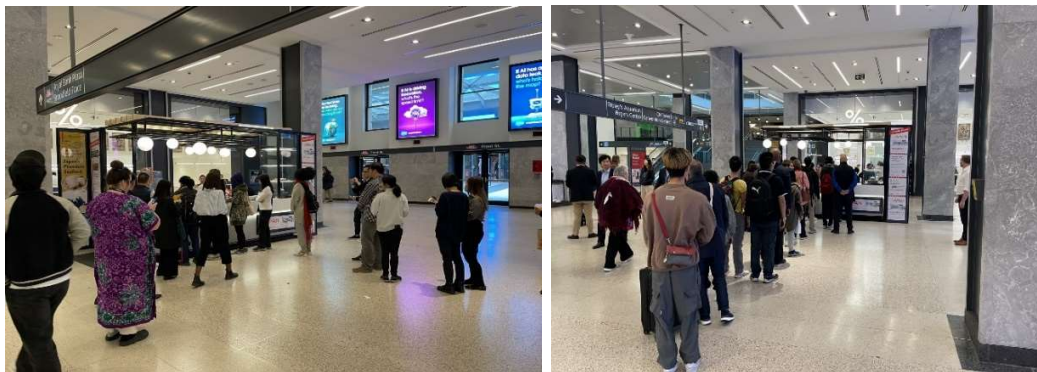
**Next Stop: Japan – Four days from Nov. 1 (Wed.) – 4 (Sat.); 11 am ~ 7 pm;  
West Wing of Toronto's Union Station**

Link: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/canada/events/nextstopjapan.html>

## 2. Stressing the Safety of Japanese Seafood with Scallops

As a pre-event promotion for Next Stop: Japan, JETRO Toronto provided samples of Japanese scallops at Union Station on Oct. 19 and 20 to stress the safety of Japanese seafood to the public.

Free samples of Japanese scallops were distributed in the Union Station concourse. The 3,000 available samples were completely distributed within a short time on both days. I believe this was a wonderful opportunity to inform Torontonians about the safety of Japanese seafood products.



**Free scallops at Union Station**

## 3. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Japanese School of Toronto Shokokai

The Japanese School of Toronto Shokokai was established in 1973 with the aim of providing classes and learning opportunities for children of expatriate employees of Japanese companies in Canada. The school, established by the Toronto Japanese Association of Commerce and Industry (Shokokai), allowed these students to continue with their Japanese education while living here. On Oct. 21, a celebration was held to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school, and I had the honour on that occasion of conferring to it the Consul-General's Commendation.

Since its establishment, the school has strived to enrich its educational activities, and its graduates include talented individuals active in a variety of fields. One of the

alumni who gave a presentation during the anniversary celebration, Dr. KATSUTA Tsuyoshi, is a local physician. The experiences he shared certainly provided useful lessons for the students. It is not easy to attend classes at the Japanese School on weekends and complete their assignments while attending regular school. The school was able to celebrate this auspicious milestone due to the tireless efforts of the students and their burning desire to learn, as well as the guidance of past principals and teaching staff who responded to the students' needs. Some of the students in the three-year high school program are already in university but are still aiming to obtain their high school diploma from the Japanese School nonetheless. I also would like to express my respect and gratitude to the steering committee and its chair who have supported this school from the start, as well as the parents and alumni who provided both material and spiritual support for its activities.

The world in which we exist has changed dramatically over the past 50 years. We now live in a time when information travels at dizzying speed and society, culture, and economics cross national borders. Technological innovations have narrowed the distance between people and nations, making it possible to instantly access all kinds of news and information no matter where you are. On the other hand, having such information may not be useful unless you develop the ability to judge it critically. Indeed, it may even be harmful without each of us gaining the ability to make individual, informed decisions.

In this sense, the international sensibilities fostered among graduates and current students at the school is invaluable in enabling them to understand various world events. As the world becomes even more closely connected in the future, this ability is certain to become increasingly crucial.

I therefore think it would be wonderful if the school can serve as a location where alumni of the school can connect with their successors who wish to expand their opportunities.



**Commemorative celebration at the Japanese School of Toronto Shokokai**