

PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL

An economic bond that runs deep SHOKOOKAI OF PORTLAND CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

The bond between Japan and Oregon and southwest Washington runs deep, which is why we are excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Shokookai of Portland (The Japan Business Association of Portland).

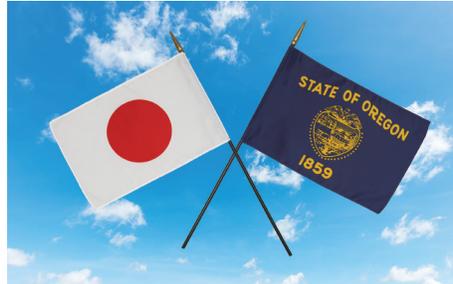
Our organization brings together Japanese businesses and communities in the region to build mutually beneficial relationships. Throughout our history, we have promoted strong economic, cultural and educational ties between Oregon / southwest Washington and Japan. We've helped Japanese companies and their employees and families settle into the region smoothly and comfortably.

The economic benefits to the region are varied.

Japan is one of the most critical international trading partners of the region. In fact, there are more Japan-based companies with outposts in Oregon and southwest Washington than any other foreign country.

All told, there are approximately 130 to 140 Japanese companies located here, including JAE Oregon, Ajinomoto Windsor, Epson Portland, Hitachi High Technologies America, SEH America, Sharp Microelectronics of the Americas, and Yamasa Corporation USA.

Their economic impact is significant. These Japanese companies have created approximately 8,000 to 9,000 jobs in the area, and the



numbers continue to grow. Further, the capital investment by these Japanese companies in the region is the second highest after the United Kingdom, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Japanese companies operating here represent a diverse range of industries, from manufacturing and trading to services and transportation. Since the early 1950's, Japanese trading companies have helped facilitate the export of wheat, soybeans, corn and other commodities to Asia, including to major customers in Japan. The relationship benefits farmers in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and North Dakota, as well as the buyers of those agricultural products overseas.

Japanese companies have also buoyed the region's semiconductor industry, now known as the "Silicon Forest." Key Japanese companies in the industry have been supporting cutting-edge technologies by supplying state-of-the-art semiconductor manufacturing and metrology equipment, process and application solutions,



Masaaki Moriya is president of Shokookai of Portland.

advanced materials, chemicals and local technical support capabilities.

There are many reasons why Japanese companies have been attracted to Oregon.

The Northwest provides a great environment and high-quality affordable water, which is indispensable for manufacturing businesses. And Oregon is convenient geographically for Japanese companies. From the Portland gateway, it is only about 10 hours with a direct flight to Japan.

For these and many other reasons, Oregon and southwest Washington continue to attract Japanese companies and people. We feel comfortable and welcomed with the long-term friendly relationship between the region and Japan.

To celebrate the bonds we have formed, we are hosting a range of events in honor of our 50th anniversary. As we do that, we'd like express our sincere appreciation to this community for supporting us for the last 50 years.

We look forward to continuing to grow in the next 50 years.