



PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

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JACCC ANNOUNCES NAMING OF ITS CULINARY CENTER TO THE WATANABE CULINARY CULTURAL CENTER

LOS ANGELES – The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center has named its culinary center the Watanabe Culinary Cultural Center in recognition of a \$2 million lead gift from The Toshizo Watanabe Foundation to JACCC’s culinary initiative.

The Watanabe Culinary Cultural Center will be an exhibition and learning center highlighting Japanese cuisine, culinary talent, food and beverage products, and other culinary products. It will be connected with the James Irvine Japanese Garden on JACCC’s campus, in the heart of Little Tokyo; and as a part of the dynamic and growing Downtown Los Angeles, it is an optimal location for launching a new culinary concept.

“JACCC’s culinary initiative will play an important role in the continuing efforts to bridge communities and bringing new audiences to JACCC and Little Tokyo,” said Mr. Watanabe. “Hidemi and I are proud to support the Culinary Cultural Center and its programs as it will be a great resource and gathering place for people to learn about Japanese foods, traditions, techniques, and sharing culture with future generations.”

“We are grateful to Toshizo and Hidemi Watanabe and The Toshizo Watanabe Foundation for their generous gift to launch the Watanabe Culinary Cultural Center,” said Craig Tomiyoshi, JACCC Board Chair. “Their leadership and vision to strengthen U.S.–Japan relations has made them cultural ambassadors, bridging communities together through scholarships and the arts.”

“We look forward to the completion of the Watanabe Culinary Cultural Center,” said JACCC President & CEO, Leslie A. Ito. “It will hold true to JACCC’s mission of being the epicenter for Japanese and Japanese American arts and culture as a new concept enhancing our performing arts, visual arts, and traditional arts programs, and serving diverse communities in Southern California and beyond.”

Additional major supporters for the Watanabe Culinary Cultural Center are Hoshizaki America, Ken & Jo Ann Hamamura, Suntory Holdings Ltd., Joachim Splichal, and Pasona NA, Inc.

About Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC)

Founded in 1971, Japanese American Cultural & Community Center is one of the largest ethnic arts and cultural centers of its kind in the United States. A hub for Japanese and Japanese American arts and culture and a community gathering place for the diverse voices it inspires—JACCC connects traditional and contemporary; community participants and creative professionals; Southern California and the world beyond. JACCC also provides office space in its five-story complex to a wide variety of nonprofit cultural, educational, and community-based organizations in Los Angeles.

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