

For Immediate Release**ACCJ Celebrates 60 Years of Contribution to Japan's Prosperity and Launches the Soft Landing Taskforce to Support Women Wishing to Return to the Workplace**

September 10, 2008 – As part of the ACCJ's 60th anniversary celebration, ACCJ President Allan Smith announced the establishment of the Soft Landing Taskforce, which will activate a Chamber-wide effort to facilitate the smooth re-entry of Japanese women into the workforce after career breaks, including partnering with Japanese government initiatives.

"The Soft Landing Taskforce provides an excellent opportunity for companies to demonstrate commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices while accessing a pool of talented individuals who are motivated to prove themselves in the workplace, and who might not otherwise be offered the opportunity," President Smith remarked. Additionally, he commented, "Given the changing demographics in Japan, firms that tap into this talent pool create a meaningful competitive advantage for themselves."

President Smith announced that Mariko Nakazono of Shinsei Bank, Adam Kassab of Mercer Japan Ltd. (Kanto), and Mari Nogami of P&G Max Factor (Kansai), have been selected to lead the Soft Landing Taskforce. They will explore additional ways to support women returning to the workforce, and determine how the ACCJ can provide an effective platform to connect talented candidates with ACCJ member firms.

Additionally, the ACCJ Kansai Chapter will offer a scholarship to a deserving candidate to attend an educational institution to re-enter the workforce. In conjunction with this scholarship, to be known as the "Kansai Kanreki-kinen Scholarship," the ACCJ will hold its third annual ACCJ Kansai Walk-A-Thon next month to raise funds to improve the environment for working women.

CSR is a key pillar of the ACCJ's activities this year with a number of regular programs open to members. As part of its 60th anniversary celebrations, the ACCJ today held a special "Faces of CSR" Symposium, which included a keynote address, panel discussion, action-learning workshop and a networking reception. The symposium focused on the four

“faces” of CSR: diversity, authenticity, NGO/NPO collaboration and the environment. The symposium was an opportunity for business organizations - both foreign and Japanese - to contribute ideas and strategies to the ongoing dialogue about CSR in Japan.

ACCJ members attending the symposium were able to sign up to join the Soft Landing Taskforce and all corporate participants were encouraged to become sponsors.

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About the ACCJ

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) was established in 1948 by representatives of 40 American companies. Marking its 60th anniversary in 2008, the ACCJ has grown into one of the most influential business organizations in Japan. Consisting mainly of executives from American companies, currently the ACCJ has members representing 1,300 companies with offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. Working closely with the governments of the United States and Japan, business organizations, and others, the ACCJ promotes activities that help achieve its mission of further developing commerce between the United States and Japan, promoting the interests of U.S. companies and members, and improving the international business environment in Japan. Over 50 committees representing various industries play the ACCJ's central role in making policy recommendations through advocacy tools such as the Business White Paper and holding over 500 events and seminars annually on public policy and economic trends. The ACCJ is also committed to promoting charitable events and other CSR activities.

About the ACCJ's CSR Activities

The ACCJ pursues CSR initiatives through community-based fund-raising and charitable activities, such as the Community Service Fund, the annual Charity Crystal Ball in Tokyo, and Walk-A-Thon in Chubu and Kansai. As a member-run organization the ACCJ interacts daily with its members – who are its stakeholders -- through its programs, mailings, and website. The ACCJ also reaches external stakeholders in the Japanese and US governments through an active advocacy program, sharing the views and values of its members through those communications. The ACCJ strives to apply good corporate governance and project its values in its actions and behavior, practicing diversity and inclusion in its employment and membership activities.

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