



## Press Release

報道資料

***For Immediate Release***

### **ACCJ 2011 Charity Walkathon Tokyo draws more than 400 participants to Hibiya Park**

**-Kicked off with the ring of the refurbished "Liberty Bell"-**

**October 3, 2011** – The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) successfully held its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Charity Walkathon Tokyo on Saturday, October 1. More than 400 participants walked for approximately 5 km around the Hibiya Park.

This year's Walkathon coincided with a special day at Hibiya Park as a replica of the original Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania rang in the park for the first time after 60 years of silence. The Bell, which has recently undergone refurbishment, is a gift from a voluntary group of U.S. citizens to Japan in 1952.

"This is my first time joining the Walkathon Tokyo as President of the Chamber, and I feel the energy and enthusiasm of our members here to give back to communities of which they are an integral part," said ACCJ President Michael Alfant.

"I am grateful that the re-dedication of the refurbished Liberty Bell replica is taking place on the same day as our annual Walkathon. Both events highlight the longevity, closeness and strength of the relationship between Japan and the United States."

A "walk-a-thon" is a fundraising event at which participants collect donations or pledges for walking a predetermined distance or course. ACCJ members, families and guests contributed ¥2,500 a piece to participate. Many children of members and friends of the Chamber also took part in the Walkathon, contributing ¥1,000 per child (under the age of 18). Over 20 companies made additional generous contributions.

"I would like to thank all of the volunteers, organizers, and contributing member companies, especially our major sponsors, Boeing Japan, Citigroup Japan Holdings Corp. and Alfac Japan," said Special Events Committee Co-Chair Joseph Webber.

Net proceeds from the walkathon will be combined with the ACCJ's fund-raising efforts at the annual ACCJ Charity Ball in December and will be donated to the following organizations: *ACCJ Community Service Fund, The Mike Makiko Fund for the Homeless, The Soma City Scholarship Fund for Orphans and Victims of the Disaster, Fukushima City Public School System, Taylor Anderson Fund for Ishinomaki, Smiles and Dreams: Tohoku Kids Project and Nadia (a non-profit clean up organization in Tohoku).*

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### About ACCJ

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) was established in 1948 by representatives of 40 American companies and 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 1,000 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 60 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.

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