



***For Immediate Release***

**ACCJ Receives the Prestigious "Peace Through Commerce" Medal for 2012**

**May 16, 2013** – The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) today was presented with the "Peace Through Commerce" Medal for 2012. Ambassador of the United States to Japan John V. Roos and U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Francisco J. Sánchez presented the medal to the ACCJ, and the presentation was followed by a keynote speech by Under Secretary Sánchez attended by both members of the ACCJ and the press.

The Peace Through Commerce Medal, originally commissioned in 1790 by Thomas Jefferson during his tenure as the United States' first Secretary of State, has been awarded to fewer than 20 individuals and organizations in its 223-year history. It is the highest honor awarded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, recognizing those whose actions contribute to the promotion of peace and commerce through international trade and by strengthening relationships between countries.

ACCJ Chairman Michael J. Alfant, who was ACCJ President in 2012 - the time frame for which the Medal was awarded - said, "I was extremely honored to receive this award on behalf of the ACCJ. This recognition of the great work that ACCJ members do every day to strengthen ties between the U.S. and Japan and to promote 'peace through commerce' is a true milestone for the Chamber, and our members can be proud."

ACCJ President Laurence W. Bates added, "This medal is really a testament to the hard work of thousands of ACCJ members to improve commercial ties between our two countries. At the ACCJ, we wouldn't be able to do so much that we do were it not for the great support of our counterparts in the U.S. Department of Commerce and throughout the U.S. Government, so to receive this medal from such great friends makes the award that much more special to us."

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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, the ACCJ has members representing over 1,000 companies with offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. Working closely with the governments of the United States and Japan and other business organizations, the ACCJ promotes trade and investment flows between the United States and Japan, promoting the interests of U.S. companies and members, and improving the environment for international business in Japan. Over 60 committees representing various industries play a central role in making ACCJ policy recommendations by issuing Viewpoints, Public Comments and White Papers and holding over 500 events and seminars annually on public policy and economic trends. The ACCJ also undertakes charitable efforts and supports its members' CSR activities.

PRESS CONTACT: ACCJ External Affairs (phone: 03 3433 6542; email: [external@accj.or.jp](mailto:external@accj.or.jp)).