



For Immediate Release

**Untapped Potential: Women in Japan's Workforce
ACCJ Launches White Paper in Support of
GOJ's 2020/30 Goal**

June 1, 2016 – The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) today launched a White Paper proposing an integrated partnership-based blueprint for action to help the public and private sectors in Japan achieve the Government of Japan's "2020/30" target of women holding 30 percent of management and leadership positions by 2020.

The White Paper, prepared by the ACCJ's Women in Business Committee, draws on two years of research and interviews with businesses and academics, including a review of international best practices. It addresses ten areas to enhance labor mobility, provide a solid and seamless support system for women, and assist in the mindset change necessary to ensure that Japan can progress toward its 2020/30 target.

"I am very excited to announce the first Women in Business White Paper. Implementation of the recommendations in this White Paper will better ensure that Japan meets its 2020/30 targets which are essential not only to enhancing social equality but also to boosting Japan's economic growth. We hope that the White Paper will serve as a blueprint for the GOJ, Japan's prefectural and local governments and private sector entities so that they can collaborate in reaching this important goal," said ACCJ President Christopher LaFleur.

"Bringing about the day when men and women are truly on an equal footing in business will require a change in mindset" believe Ryann Thomas and Mari Matthews, Co-Chair of the Women in Business Committee, adding that "the White Paper outlines steps both the government and corporate Japan can take to begin this change."

The ten areas on which the White Paper provides detailed recommendations are:

1. **Reform Working Hours.** Change the culture of encouraging employees to spend unproductive but long hours in the office.
2. **Support Male Champions of Change.** Encourage male leaders to promote gender equality in corporate Japan and the public sector.
3. **Foster Ikumen Culture.** Encourage men to be more active in raising their children and assisting with housework.
4. **Increase Transparency on Women in Leadership Roles.** Strengthen requirements for transparency related to the gender mix of management and executive positions in private and listed companies.
5. **Create a New Type of Labor Contract.** Allow companies and employees to conclude labor contracts that encourage women to return to the workforce as regular employees and retain pay and promotion opportunities.
6. **Provide Tax Incentives.** Create tax incentives that encourage corporations to hire and promote more women and support individuals by reducing financial burdens on families, including single mothers.
7. **Bring Seniors in as Before- and Afterschool Childcare Providers.** Support working mothers by tapping into Japan's growing ranks of retirees to staff childcare centers.
8. **Ease Employment Restrictions for Domestic Workers.** Revise Japan's immigration policies to make it easier to hire foreign nationals as domestic workers, which will provide working parents with another childcare option.
9. **Encourage HR-Led Talent Management and Training.** Support the evolution of strong HR departments whose programs foster diversity, inclusion, and the empowerment of women in the workplace.
10. **Provide Employee Assistance Programs.** Build employee assistance programs and offer supplemental programs that include concierge services such as childcare, nursing care, self-improvement, and health and wellness management.

Continuing in its work to increase the participation of women in the Japanese workforce, the ACCJ will again hold Women in Business Summits across Japan in 2016, with Kansai slated for June 29, 2016, Chubu slated for September 13, 2016, and Tokyo slated for October 27, 2016. One of the flagship events for the ACCJ and the Women in Business Committee, last year's Women in Business Tokyo

Summit featured approximately 50 speakers, drew an audience of over 700 men and women, and included keynote speeches from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy.

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A link to the White Paper can be found here:

http://www.accj.or.jp/images/PDF/2016_wib_whitepaper_e.pdf

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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. The ACCJ's more than 60 committees represent a variety of industries and make policy recommendations through advocacy tools such as viewpoints, public comments and white papers. The ACCJ holds approximately 500 events and seminars a year, many of which focus on government policy and economic trends. The ACCJ is also committed to promoting charitable events and CSR activities.

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