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www.gmpost.com

## AMERICA'S FASTEST GROWING STATE

As the global economy reels from the shock dealt by COVID-19 in 2020, some countries have begun showing signs of recovery from the pandemic. In the U.S., the state of Texas in particular, has attracted new investment from Japan because of its entrenched competitiveness and established industrial base.

At the height of the pandemic, CKD USA, a producer of fluid components critical to the semiconductor industry, announced last November plans to expand its operations and build a new plant in Austin. The facility is expected to open before the end of this year.

"CKD's \$13 million investment in the Lone Star State further solidifies Texas' reputation as a premier investment destination both nationally and internationally," said Gov. Greg Abbott.

Meanwhile, the Texas Japan Office in Tokyo, headed by Director Hiroyuki Watanabe, is working hard to bring in more Japanese companies and find them the most suitable locations for their requirements.

Although most Japanese companies decide to set up within major urban regions like San Antonio, Dallas and Houston, some have chosen other areas and cities. The second-largest state by area, Texas offers a wide range of industrial ecosystems and a huge talent pool that can meet any investor's needs.

"After the COVID-19 situation settles, we will see a fast resumption of direct investment in the USA by large-sized Japanese companies. There have been challenges for small and medium-sized entities to expand to the United States because of COVID-19 and their limited resources. Despite that, however, they recognize the necessity of setting up operations

in the United States in the near future," Watanabe said.

Like all prudent investors who investigate a new location's feasibility, those Japan-based companies that made the move cited the state's competitiveness in key areas such as workforce and talent availability, proximity to thriving markets in Mexico and the U.S. Midwest, low tax rates and quality of life.

"Texas enables businesses to profit from an economically focused political environment in a great place to live. For example, there is a trend where California tech companies are relocating head offices to places like Austin or San Antonio," said Kei Ashizawa, principal at law firm Ashizawa LLC and current Texas chair of the U.S.-Japan Council.

"In 2020, Texas largely stayed open for business compared to other states and countries. It was not without a struggle, but it was a very positive thing for our economy and our people. Japanese companies must venture out if they want Japan to thrive. When searching for the ideal growth environment, Texas is the best place for Japanese businesses to succeed," she added.

Since 2010, the population of Texas has grown sharply, with nearly 3.5 million people moving to the state in the past 12 years. Over the last 12 months alone, the state's population had a net gain of nearly 400,000, creating a real estate boom that has consequently caught the attention of Japan-based investors.

"Our Japanese clients are buying real estate and securitizing them. We represent banks, finance companies and wealthy investors that are buying properties, a lot of (them) located here in Texas," said Lisa Kitagawa of law firm Kitagawa & Ebert.

On another front, cross-border investment from the United States to Japan continues unabated.

In Houston, investment manager FCA Corp. has backed the Japanese market for more than 30 years. Looking beyond the main Nikkei index, FCA is focusing on Japanese small and midsize enterprises with proven longevity and niche capabilities in Japan who need an increased presence in the United States.

"We have confidence in our Japanese investments. They have stayed the course and we continue to believe in Japanese entrepreneurs and Japanese market. We also appreciate the value of diversification in portfolio and offer that to source-country specific funds," said FCA CEO Robert W. Scharar, who manages the International Series Trust.

Amid the stiff competition to attract new investment and provide the required manpower, Texas has established programs to ensure a steady pipeline of skilled workers. In the San Antonio region, for example, stakeholders in the manufacturing sector launched the Texas Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education.

"We're seeing a large influx of companies coming in and that is driving up the demand for skilled workers. To prepare for that, we have been working with community colleges and universities to come up with training programs. We have one called the Alamo Academies, which works with independent school districts in our region and enlists juniors and seniors to work half a day in a plant so they understand the intricacies of manufacturing," said San Antonio Manufacturers' Association President and CEO Rey Chavez.

With exports valued at close to \$280 billion in 2020, Texas has remained the top exporting state for 19 years in a row, thanks largely to its extensive rail and road network, the largest in the nation, and the highest number of land- and sea-based ports of entry.

"Our energy and electricity costs are also among the lowest in the nation. Add those to our growing skilled workforce, Texas is going to remain a leader in attracting major investors and exporters," said Texas Association of Manufacturers President Tony Bennett.

As the economy of Texas expands, Japan's Consul-General Hideo Fukushima expects more Japanese investors to head to the state, particularly to the major metro areas of San Antonio, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and Austin.

"In the past three years, the growth of Japanese business in the state exceeded 10% each year. In 2020, figures will show that trade between Japan and Texas doubled since then," Fukushima said.

Another development that has excited Japanese investors, large and small, is the burgeoning startup sector and its goal to become an energy innovation hub.

"The energy sector in Houston has many opportunities for Japanese companies looking to solve the world's most pressing environmental challenges. There are incubators, like Greentown Labs, which is one of the largest in the nation. The Ion District in the Houston area and can bring together players in the energy sector," said Japan External Trade Organization in Houston Chief Executive Director Masahiro Sakurachi.

## GREATER:SATX – THE LAND OF COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR JAPAN AND THE WORLD

The San Antonio region and its eight surrounding counties have nurtured long-standing relationships with Japan since the 1980s. The steadfast commitment has yielded a steady influx of Japanese companies to the state, the most prominent being Toyota.

For more than 40 years, San Antonio has made sure that, while promoting the benefits of the area, it can also meet the requirements of Japanese companies for qualified workers, thus providing a smooth transition and opportunity for growth.

The entry of Toyota has caused a positive ripple effect, sparking interest among other major companies and Japanese investors. Since Toyota announced its move to San Antonio, Tesla, Navistar and 30 Japanese companies have decided to transfer to the region.

A regional economic partnership, greater:SATX is a one-stop business resource for both Japanese and non-Japanese

companies facilitating access to their required workforces, facilities, government support, supply chain, education and business community connections.

Beyond business, greater:SATX and San Antonio also promote cooperation in research and cultural exchange between the region and Japan in line with its vision of holistic development. Through four decades, San Antonio's leaders have developed a solid relationship built on mutual trust and respect.

"We are a community of hard workers. San Antonians are loyal and we value our relationships. That's who we are as a majority-Hispanic community," said greater:SATX President and CEO Jenna Saucedo-Herrera.

"Our attributes align well with Japanese culture and values. Japan has a rich history and legacy, and we are grateful to the Japanese companies who choose to invest in our community. We look forward to



The 2019 Toyota and supplier expansion added over \$1 billion investment and 900 jobs to the Greater San Antonio region.

welcoming additional Japanese businesses to the Greater San Antonio, Texas, region," Saucedo-Herrera added. ■  
→ <http://greatersatx.com>



## HOUSTON: LEADING THE GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSITION, KEY INNOVATIONS

As Japanese investors recognize the increasing importance of forming partnerships with U.S. companies to address the climate crisis, the Houston region is working to leverage its long-time energy industry expertise to lead the transition to a low-carbon world.

Building on the decades-old presence of many Japanese investors in Houston's oil and gas and chemical industries, the Greater Houston Partnership (GHP) is looking forward to a new chapter in this relationship.

The Japanese government has prioritized the creation of a carbon neutral world, pledging to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Meanwhile, the public and private sectors in Japan have stepped up efforts to develop zero-emission technologies in shipping, automotive, aviation and manufacturing.

Leaders in the Houston region are focused on jump-starting emerging technologies across carbon capture, use, and storage (CCUS), hydrogen, battery manufacturing, and the circular economy. This innovation is in addition to scaling wind, solar, renewable natural gas, low-carbon liquefied natural gas and biofuels.

In addition, Houston is a leading city for the aerospace and commercial space, life sciences, manufacturing and logistics industries. Venture capital funding of Houston companies has tripled over the last four years, and key innovation-focused facilities, such as The Ion, bring together startups, the academia, and various enterprises to drive innovation.

"Houston has been leading innovations across energy, aerospace and life sciences for decades, and as home to the Port of Houston, which is the busiest in the country, the Texas Medical Center and the Houston Spaceport. Houston has the infrastructure to support tremendous growth in the future," said GHP Chief Economic Development Officer Susan Davenport.

Whether creating new innovations to power the world or designing technologies headed for outer space, Houston is an ideal partner for Japanese investors searching for a new frontier. ■  
→ [www.houston.org](http://www.houston.org)



Houston's skyline impresses all visitors.

GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

## DALLAS: A SECOND HOME FOR JAPANESE BUSINESS

As COVID-19 disrupted supply chains around the world, businesses rushed to decentralize their operations and set up regional hubs, a strategy that was commonplace among Japanese companies even before the pandemic.

For many years, Dallas has seen a steady stream of Japanese investment from the likes of Orix USA, NTT America, Shimadzu Medical Systems, YKK USA and Konica Minolta Business Solutions USA, to name a few.

Many other Japanese companies have invested in Dallas over the last several years, attracted by the region's business-friendly environment, lower taxes, cheaper operational costs, abundance of skilled workers and its proximity to Mexico, Canada and the U.S. West and East coasts.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas proved to have a resilient economy because of its diversified industries.

As the ninth-largest city and fourth-largest metro area in the United States, Dallas provides reliable and efficient transport links to Japan. Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport has two flights to Tokyo daily, while Nippon Cargo operates freight runs between Japan and the U.S. four times a week.

The Dallas metro area is also home to 15 top universities, 24 corporate innovation centers and 40 accelerators and incubators. That environment of innovation has been a crucial factor in attracting Japanese companies looking to establish a research and development outpost in the U.S.

Beyond the tax incentives and tax credits offered by Dallas, Japanese expatriates have encountered a welcoming and developed social infrastructure, the sort of which are normally found in New York and California. They have cited the wealth of education, cultural and culinary offerings as among the best things about Dallas for them, their spouses and their children. ■  
→ <https://dallascityhall.com>



Downtown Dallas comes alive at night.

## IRVING: THE 'HEADQUARTERS OF HEADQUARTERS' IN TEXAS



IRVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Only a 10-minute drive from the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, which has daily flights to Haneda and Narita airports in Japan, Irving-Las Colinas serves as an ideal location for Japanese investors looking to set up head offices and administrative offices within the U.S. heartland and close to Mexico.

Known by many as the "Headquarters of Headquarters" in Texas, the city is home to some of the largest Japanese companies in the state and the country, like NEC, Seven & I (owner of 7-Eleven Inc.), Fujifilm, Canon, Oki Data and Kyocera Mita.

Las Colinas, the business center of Irving, is a 12,000-acre

master-planned development with modern transportation infrastructure, residential areas and commercial parks. The area is pedestrian-focused where amenities to live, work and play are just a short walk away.

"We've seen significant growth and representation of Japanese companies over the years. Our plan is to attract more investors from Japan," said Joe Chapa, vice president of International Affairs and Sister Cities at the Greater Irving Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

Aside from the city's proximity to DFW Airport and its well-planned communities, the Irving-Las Colinas Chamber also boasts a 5-star National Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a solid endorsement of its policies, community engagement and efficient procedures.

"We're a community that puts business and industry first. Our

priority is to help global and international companies find their new home in Irving-Las Colinas. We serve as a resource and a partner, minimize business disruptions for investors, executives and their workforce, roll up the red tape and roll out the red carpet for a seamless integration into our community," said Beth Bowman, president and CEO of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce and Irving Economic Development Partnership.

"Through our relationships with Japanese-based companies in Irving-Las Colinas, our Sister Cities initiative, our International Trade Development and Assistance Center and partnerships built through trade missions, we will continue to strengthen cultural and educational connections between Irving-Las Colinas and Japan," Bowman added. ■  
→ [www.irvingchamber.com](http://www.irvingchamber.com)

## LITIGATION STRATEGY: THE KEY TO WINNING LEGAL DISPUTES

"In the USA, only 1% of civil cases go to trial, so very few U.S. business lawyers have actual trial and arbitration experience," said Lisa Kitagawa, partner at Kitagawa & Ebert, one of the few U.S. law firms that has won complex trials and arbitrations for Japanese companies in multiple states, federal courts and arbitrations.

"Because of our litigation strategy, trial experience, Japanese bilingual team, understanding of U.S. and Japan cultures, and proficiency in technology, we are successful in winning complex business disputes," said Kitagawa, who is the third of only four American lawyers to have graduated from Kyoto University. She also attended the University of Tokyo.

Partner James Ebert also studied at Kyoto University and is licensed as both a lawyer and a California certified public accountant.

"We also have a busy transactional business practice in contracts, corporate, M&A (mergers and acquisitions), real estate, employment and other matters. We understand the complexities of doing business in the USA and provide strategies to navigate doing business in the USA in order to succeed and win," Kitagawa said.

Representing Japanese clients of all sizes in the energy, logistics, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, technology, automotive, food, internet, finance, real estate, entertainment and investment sectors, among others, the law firm experienced growth in 2020 and 2021 despite the pandemic because of its extensive investment in technology.

Kitagawa stressed that Japanese businesses need experienced U.S. business trial lawyers with strategies to identify opportunities and manage risks.

"The laws are constantly changing, so Japanese businesses must adjust for differences in various state laws and be aware of demographics and regional cultures," she said. ■  
→ [www.JapanUSLaw.com](http://www.JapanUSLaw.com)



Kitagawa & Ebert Partners Lisa Kitagawa and James Ebert



## IRVING, TEXAS

Recognized as the Headquarters of Headquarters, Irving-Las Colinas is one of the leading cities in Texas for foreign direct investment.



IRVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP  
irvingchamber.com  
economicdevelopment@irvingchamber.com



switchplace

Furnished housing solutions and project-based services that place guests where they want to be.

SWITCHPLACE.COM

## SWITCHPLACE: THE RIGHT PLACE TO STAY IN TEXAS, THE U.S. AND THE WORLD

Texas-based Switchplace overcomes the disruption in the temporary housing sector by offering customizable solutions to businesses that need transitional accommodations and related amenities for their employees.

Despite the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the housing industry around the world, Switchplace proved that, after more than 20 years in the business, it had the resilience and agility to navigate the crisis and thrive in this very challenging environment.

Because of its wide range of options, Switchplace has become the favored provider of ideal homes, albeit temporary, for businesspeople on the move, whether alone, with their

families, in Texas, out of state, or around the world.

As its business grows, Switchplace is keen on assisting more Japanese companies that operate in the United States and around the world, confident in its developed expertise in managing large groups, serving them with passion and understanding, while respecting cultural differences. To better serve its guests in Asia, Switchplace maintains an office in Singapore.

"We like saying that *omotenashi* (Japanese for spirit of selfless hospitality) is at the core of Switchplace. We look forward to welcoming more Japanese guests to the Switchplace family," said founder and CEO Tammy Gillespie. ■  
→ [www.switchplace.com](http://www.switchplace.com)



Switchplace makes you feel like you are at home.



Development Corporation of Abilene CEO Misty Mayo

### ABILENE: THE KEY CITY

Abilene, Texas, is a key economic development player in a state that continues to attract businesses from around the globe. A critical driver of the city's economic success and material growth is the Development Corporation of Abilene led by CEO Misty Mayo, who recently negotiated the largest economic development transaction in the DCOA's history.

Abilene is uniquely positioned with attractive tax incentives, strong infrastructure, a talented local workforce, a business-friendly environment and proximity to the state's three largest business and international hubs. The city is only a short plane ride away from Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston and San Antonio.

One of the DCOA's many success stories this year is Project Future Hope, an agreement with Abilene Christian University's (ACU) NEXT Lab. ACU is leading a consortium of acclaimed research-focused universities as they work to design, license and commission a molten salt research reactor on its campus.



Abilene has diverse business partners across the world, including those in Latin America, Mexico, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Canada and Australia. The DCOA continues to promote itself to international markets as an ideal location for business and revenue growth. Japan is chief among the DCOA's priorities for global markets.

"Japan is a valuable prospective market for us because our region already serves as an international hub. It's our mission to recruit and retain high-performing companies, and our goal is to be a long-term partner in the success of these companies," Mayo said. [www.abilenedcoa.com](http://www.abilenedcoa.com)

### MCALLEN, TEXAS: THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS

The Texan city of McAllen represents an important contributor to the state economy and to the well-being of more than 2.5 million residents living along this thriving growth corridor with Reynosa, Mexico.

"For the last 34 years, we have welcomed over 700 companies from around the world into our business community. We are especially proud of the accomplishments of the McAllen/Reynosa Japanese Chamber of Commerce and its member companies," McAllen Economic Development Corp. President and CEO Keith Patridge said.

"Today, these companies utilize innovative, cutting edge, advanced manufacturing technology and logistic support to meet the demands of the rapidly changing global market place from their McAllen and Reynosa manufacturing factories," Patridge added.

McAllen's location along the U.S.-Mexico border provides companies with the advantage of affordable labor

costs, efficient legal and tax systems, beneficial currency exchange costs and favorable trade arrangements, while maintaining a manufacturing facility on either or both sides of the border, managed by one team, either in the United States or in Mexico.

"If the McAllen-Reynosa metro area looks as good to you as it has for the hundreds of international companies that have located here, we will be glad to help you take a close look. We have highly qualified staff ready to answer any of your questions," Patridge said. [www.mcallenedc.org](http://www.mcallenedc.org)



McAllen Economic Development President and CEO Keith Patridge

### A LOOK AT 30 YEARS OF JAPANESE MANUFACTURERS' STAYING POWER

For more than three decades, Houston-based financial adviser Rob Scharar, a CPA and attorney, has invested in mid-cap companies in Japan, such as niche manufacturers with a limited investment following in the United States.



FCA Corp President Robert Scharar

run that way for a long time and many have no investor following in the United States. We try to bridge that gap. Our fund website includes Japanese stock exchange links, economic organizations and an interactive map of Japan," Scharar explained.

In determining the right companies to invest in, FCA has formulated a "three R's" test: real companies, real products, real financials.

"Because we are a fund that invests in Japan, our goal is to invest in a portfolio of companies that not only mirrors the market index, but also provides a diversified exposure to Japanese stocks that are not easily accessible to U.S. investors," he said.

FCA focuses on companies that create diversified products and services, including manufacturers of everyday essential items, especially those that embody monozukuri. <https://www.commonwealthfunds.com> <https://fcacorp.com>



### CLEARBLADE - LEADING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WITH 'IoT'

Since launching its Internet of Things platform in 2013, ClearBlade has become a strategic partner for major businesses searching to digitize their operational processes and also anticipate future problems, whatever they may be.



By developing a powerful cloud agnostic IoT platform and Edge platform, the Austin-based company is able to deliver rapid value without the need for expensive developer teams and offer innovative products and solutions that operate across a client's system, networks, devices and different protocols regardless of size, distance, or complexity of the task.



Among the success stories of ClearBlade is Sumitomo Corporation of Americas, which is considering applications for use in its water, infrastructure, energy, oil and gas, transportation, and public safety projects in the United States. Thanks to ClearBlade's Intelligent Assets, the Japanese conglomerate will be able to monitor its projects in real time, identify areas of improvement, and take immediate resolving actions.

One of the most talked-about topics in the area of sustainability has been the reduction of the carbon footprint and the use of resources, like water, in industrial processes.

Leveraging ClearBlade's IoT, cloud computing, edge computing, and artificial intelligence software capability, Sumitomo would be able to manage its performance in terms of sustainability, particularly in its reduction of carbon emissions and wastewater.

"We have enjoyed a very collaborative and harmonious relationship with Sumitomo Corporation of Americas over the past few years. We are working collaboratively across several Sumitomo businesses around the world to drive digital transformation and reduce carbon emissions. This is something I am honored to be a part of with Sumitomo," said ClearBlade co-founder and CEO Eric Simone. [www.clearblade.com](http://www.clearblade.com)

### CITY OF HEMPSTEAD: READY FOR TAKEOFF

As more Japanese companies relocate to Texas, several of the state's officials have stepped up efforts to publicize the benefits of setting up manufacturing operations within their cities. Located 80 kilometers from downtown Houston, Hempstead has targeted Japanese companies looking for a base that can easily service the North American and Mexican markets.



Hempstead EDC Executive Director Kenneth Pilcher

Aside from having abundant shovel-ready sites for greenfield development, the city sits at the heart of some of the country's leading academic institutions, including Prairie View A&M University, Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin.

"We're seeing an acceleration of research and development across all universities and as this continues, Hempstead and our sister towns of Waller and Prairie View will become places where the technology and innovations created will be commercialized through local startups and the Houston industrial complex. We can anticipate that technology and innovations will spread across the space, medical and energy complexes, all of which have a significant presence in this region of Texas," said Kenneth Pilcher, director of economic development for Hempstead.

As the COVID-19 pandemic impacted global supply chains, Hempstead is well-positioned to accommodate investors from Japan and the rest of the world.

"As Japanese companies look to reposition

themselves because of the supply chain issues that emerged during the pandemic, they may want to be in places where they can bring inventory and raw materials into the country. Hempstead's proximity to major highways, rail and port connectivity benefits manufacturers, while the academic organizations surrounding the town can provide workforce talent," Pilcher added.

Home to companies and organizations like SpaceX, Blue Origin and NASA, Texas is in the center of a new wave of space exploration. Situated just outside the Houston metroplex, Hempstead is an ideal location for companies and entrepreneurs developing and building new technologies for satellites or sensor networks used in space. [www.growhempstead.com](http://www.growhempstead.com)



Hempstead is a community-minded town with big-city benefits and an ideal location for many Japan-based companies. Pictured above is Gazebo Park in downtown Hempstead.

### NEXCO-CENTRAL: INNOVATIVE HIGHWAY SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY STATE

NEXCO-Central, one of the largest toll road operators based in Japan, has sought to engage in international expansion strategies. It has provided consultation services and dispatched skilled engineers to many developing countries for decades. In line with its goal to expand to other industrialized countries, NEXCO-Central opened its first U.S. subsidiary, NEXCO Highway Solutions of America Inc. (NNSA), in Texas in 2020.

NNSA looked into opportunities to work with city governments and offered them its Smart Pavement Management System (SPM), which allows engineers to analyze the condition of pavement and produce an assessment of the same. Through NEXCO-Central's artificial intelligence system, clients are able to see specific areas that need repairs and their overall condition rating.

Following trial programs in Texas, city officials experienced the benefits of NEXCO-Central's SPM. NNSA expects the results to produce more efficient budgets for road maintenance, more effective maintenance planning, and more transparency in data-driven decision-making. The demand for the SPM is expected to grow because of a renewed commitment to expand road infrastructure in the state.

And as Japanese investors continue to relocate to Texas, NNSA hopes that there will be an increase in the use of innovative Japanese technology across the state.

"Japan has been developing highways for more than 60 years, but the U.S. has an even longer history of highway development. NNSA is focused on pavement assessment for the present, yet we wish to implement further technologies and services like those offered by NEXCO-Central back in Japan. Through this, I hope that we can act as a bridge between Japan and the U.S.," said NNSA President Hidemitsu Yumoto. <https://www.cnexco.com> <https://www.c-nexco.co.jp/en/>



### CITY OF RICHARDSON: HIGH-TECH HUB IN TEXAS



Fujitsu's campus in Richardson, Texas

The city of Richardson is among 21 communities that joined a partnership between the state of Texas and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to attract more Japanese small and midsize enterprises to the state.

Located in the fast-growing Dallas-Fort Worth area, Richardson has attracted many Japanese corporations, like Accretch, Advantest America, Fujitsu America, Kyocera International, Globberanger Corp. and TDK-Lambda America, all of them drawn by the highly skilled workforce, first-rate infrastructure and excellent schools.

The city brands itself as the Telecom Corridor, a reputation that has grown consistently since the 1950s with the establishment of Texas Instruments and Collins Aerospace. Today, Richardson hosts more than 500 companies engaged in telecommunications, semiconductors, advanced manufacturing and software development.



Since the 1980s, Japanese investors have set up operations in the area, enticed by the convenient, customized services provided by the Richardson Economic Development Partnership.

"Investors can expect a 'soft landing' because of the ecosystem that we developed. We have a professional team of economic developers who understand the needs of the Japanese companies," said President and CEO Bill Sproull. "We also have a very good network of service providers, who can help with everything, from tax, legal, accounting, immigration and real estate requirements."

Because of the attention given to all its foreign investors, the Texas State Legislature named the city the "International Business Capital of North Texas." The Richardson Economic Development Partnership is also a partner of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI).

On Oct. 14 at 10 a.m. (Oct. 13 at 8 p.m. Texas time), Sproull will host a webinar for TCCI members titled, "Richardson, Texas — Your Gateway to the USA Market." Registration for the webinar is available on the TCCI website via: [http://event.tokyo-cci.or.jp/event\\_detail-107844.html](http://event.tokyo-cci.or.jp/event_detail-107844.html). [www.telecomcorridor.com](http://www.telecomcorridor.com)

### STAYING CONNECTED IN CEDAR PARK

Over the past few years, Cedar Park and the region have received a steady influx of high-tech companies, such as Dell Technologies, ETS-Lindgren, Apple and Hyllion. Another arrival to this burgeoning high-tech cluster is Firefly Aerospace. A recent NASA contract winner, Firefly Aerospace designs and builds lunar landers, as well as launches vehicles into low earth orbit.



Firefly Aerospace is the latest arrival in Cedar Park.

One of the fastest-growing cities in the sprawling Austin metro area, Cedar Park was also named the fourth-most-connected small city in the United States this year by broadband telecom provider Allconnect. That connectivity has allowed entire households to thrive amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Businesses in Cedar Park appreciate the minimal disruption experienced by their employees who can work away from their physical offices. This convenience became possible because of the investment in infrastructure made in the past few years.

In recognition of the foresight and competence of Cedar Park's government and economic development team, the Texas Economic Development Council gave the city an Economic Excellence Recognition award in February.

"We work as a team, and we bend backward to accommodate the requests of all our economic stakeholders. The CEOs of the companies have my direct number, and they can reach me directly. We're here to help them become successful," said Cedar Park Director of Economic Development Ben White.

The innovation, access to resources and connectivity of Cedar Park make it the ideal location for Japanese companies looking for a new market in which to grow and expand.

"We are one of the most pro-business communities in Texas, which is among the most proactive states in the country. We're here to welcome new corporations into our community," White said. <https://cedarparktexasdc.com>

### BROOKS: HOME TO NISSEI AMERICA INC.

Located in the San Antonio, Texas region, Brooks has attracted various international companies due to its proximity to the U.S. border with Mexico, thus making it economical and easier to access the Central and South American markets.



Left to right: Brooks Development Authority President and CEO Leo Gomez, former Brooks Development Authority Chairman Steven Goldberg and Nissei America President and Representative Director Hozumi Yoda at the official opening of Nissei America's facility in Brooks in May 2018.

Since 2018, Nissei America Inc. has remained Brooks' flagship locator and a great example to other Japanese companies looking to relocate to the San Antonio area.

"If Yoda-san is happy with his experience in San Antonio and what Brooks has done for Nissei, he will tell other Japanese executives. And that will mean more than anything we could do," said Brooks Development Authority President and CEO Leo Gomez about Nissei America President and Representative Director Hozumi Yoda.

Brooks assures Japanese companies that they will be able to find the right type of workers because they have invested continuously in the development of a highly skilled workforce that can meet the various needs any company may have.

Thankful for the trust Nissei has put in them all these years, the Brooks Development Authority remains open to all companies looking for an attentive guide, a business-friendly environment and a new community to call home. [https://livebrooks.com](http://https://livebrooks.com)



Bring Your Business to Hempstead, Texas. [growhempstead.com](http://growhempstead.com) 979.921.5002

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