MORINAGA TASTES SUCCESS IN THE SOUTHEAST

There is much to celebrate for 13-year-old Morinaga. Since setting up shop in the United States 13 years ago, this Japanese confectionary manufacturer has seen its best-selling Hi-Chew candy become a fixture in the pantries of millions of Americans. As of 2013, the company said American consumers have been consuming close to 13 million pieces of that familiar blue and green candy every year. From its humble beginnings to becoming a hit with consumers, there have been many milestones along the way. For example, in 2014, the company was able to get into mainstream channels like Costco, CVS and other big-box retailers. "Hi-Chew has been proven to taste good and be safe, which makes it ideal for sale in these large big-box retailers," said Hi-Chew America’s president, Managing Director Joseph Huntemann.

In 2008, when a Hi-Chew product hit the shelves in the Southeast, it was the first time that Hi-Chew had landed in a region with such a large population. The Southeastern U.S. is one of the most diverse areas in the country, and Morinaga wanted to make sure that its product was accessible to all consumers. "We wanted to expand our product offering, not just in terms of the types of products, but also in terms of the packaging," said Huntemann.

Another milestone in the company’s growth was the introduction of new products. Since hitting the shelves in the Southeast, the company has expanded its product line to include everything from original fruit flavors to dairy-free options. "We launched dairy-free Hi-Chew in 2013, and it has been a huge success," said Huntemann.

In addition to expanding its product line, Morinaga has also been investing in its production facilities. In 2013, the company announced that it would be building a new production facility in the Southeast. "This new facility will allow us to increase our production capacity and meet the growing demand for our products," said Huntemann.

In the years since, Morinaga has continued to expand its footprint in the Southeast. The company has opened several new retail locations and has expanded its distribution network to include major retailers like Target and Walmart. "We continue to see strong growth in the Southeast, and we plan to open more retail locations in the future," said Huntemann.

Morinaga America Inc., headquartered in Atlanta, is a subsidiary of Morinaga & Co., Ltd., the largest confectionery company in Japan. Morinaga & Co., Ltd., is a leading global confectionery company with a strong focus on innovation and quality. "We are proud of our long-standing history and look forward to continuing to grow and thrive in the Southeast," said Huntemann.

AS MOFFITT BUILDS GIANT MEDICAL CITY IN PASCO COUNTY

FORGING THE FUTURE OF GREEN ENERGY IN THE U.S.

In a world where the world's thirst for hydrocarbon fuels is rising, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) has been at the forefront of green energy technology development, providing innovative solutions that address the challenges of climate change and meet the growing demand for renewable energy sources. MHI’s commitment to the energy transition is driven by the company’s long-standing heritage of innovation and its belief in the potential of technology-driven solutions to shape a sustainable future.

As a leading global company in the energy, aerospace, and transportation sectors, MHI has a comprehensive portfolio of products and services that enable the efficient and sustainable use of energy. From power generation to refrigeration systems, MHI offers a wide range of solutions that help customers achieve their energy efficiency and sustainability goals. One of the key areas where MHI excels is in advanced energy technologies, including hydrogen power, and renewable energy solutions.

MHI is well positioned to contribute to the energy transition in the United States, which is a leading market for new energy solutions. The company’s presence in the U.S. is exemplified by its headquarters in California, where MHI keeps a pulse on the latest trends and collaborates with local stakeholders to drive innovation and sustainability. MHI’s commitment to green energy is reflected in its strategic partnerships and collaborations, as well as its active role in various industry associations and forums.

In conclusion, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries’ commitment to green energy is rooted in its core values of innovation, excellence, and environmental responsibility. By leveraging its extensive global experience and technological expertise, MHI is poised to continue playing a significant role in shaping the future of energy in the U.S. and around the world.
**GDEcD: GEORGIA’S HOTLINE FOR JAPANESE INVESTORS**

If anyone appreciates the importance of being easy to reach, it must be Georgia Department of Economic Development. It was the main reason for the agency’s success with Japanese investors. “We really do want to maintain a low level of communication. We want to meet at their needs”. Joseph Huntemann, managing director of the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s Japan Office, has a proud mission to attract more Japanese investment to the state.

Midrex Technologies Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Japan’s Kobe Steel, emits in its 50-year longevity and success to a well-established culture of prioritizing people—from its employees and partners to its suppliers and customers. “Our purpose is to love and serve others,” said Midrex President and CEO Stephen Montague, adding, “I get strange looks when I say that, but I make no apologies about our purpose. There’s a greater purpose to what we do than just business. We believe in people, as well as profits. We have to please our shareholders and take care of our people at the same time.”

The US headquarters of Midrex Technologies Inc., and Midrex Direct Reduction Modules in 21 countries worldwide, with an additional two on the drawing board. Its patented direct-reduction technology improves the lives of millions of people around the world by contributing to environmental and economic sustainability and supporting various nonprofit organizations and charities. 

Midrex Direct Reduction Technology plays a leading role in the decarbonization of the global steel industry. It is highly flexible in regard to redundant sources, iron oxide feed, and product discharge options. Plants can be configured to operate using 100% hydrogen (MIDREX® H), or even with about 85% hydrogen gas production, with the remainder replacing carbon monoxide. The MIDREX® H process is increasing over time (MIDREX™ Plus). As it communicates the 40th anniversary of its acquisition by Kobe Steel, Midrex Technologies is grateful for the trust shown by its parent company throughout their relationship. “Kobe Steel has been an incredible shareholder. The steel industry usually goes through its ups and downs, and many partner companies don’t have the patience for us to develop. We have a great story of reliability, and it has always been a deep understanding that we can work together to build something greater than them,” said Joseph Huntemann.

**KURAOKA CLINIC: PROVIDING COMPLETE CARE FOR EVERYONE**

When many years practicing internal medicine in the United States, Maki Kuraoka Rheaume, MD, decided to start her own clinic in 2010, moving to Atlanta, Georgia, where she was raised. She has practiced in Atlanta, Ohio, and Dallas, Texas. Educated in Japan and the United States, Rheaume received her medical degree from the University of Miami. Kuraoka Clinic is making a positive impact on the local community. “One of the values we hold is the dedication to provide personalized, culturally sensitive, and comprehensive care to every patient in a setting that focuses on their unique needs,” said Rheaume.

“While Kuraoka Clinic is focused on providing high-quality care for patients, I always strive to give back to my community,” said Rheaume. “I believe that we can have a positive impact in the lives of all of our patients, and we are working to create a culture of wellness within our community.”

Kuraoka Rheaume, MD

“Recently, I focused on mental health issues. Many diseases have been revealed in the past due to the stress from the environment.” Rheaume said.

**GRiffin-spalding development authority: watch their space**

In the 16 years since it was launched, The Lakes At Green Valley, a 2,500-acre mixed-use development located in Griffin, Georgia, is now fully occupied, having attracted many Japanese companies looking for highly developed infrastructure, easy access to transportation links, vibrant communities and environment-friendly development plans.

“We have basically sold out The Lakes at Green Valley and we are looking to get more land to offer. We still get a lot of interest in our community. We have people that still call and hope we have space left in the eco-park. We want them to know that the store is open even if the shelves are empty,” said Griffin-Spalding Development Authority Executive Director David Luckie.

The GSDA has stepped up its efforts to acquire more land and put staff back on the shelf.” When people come to Griffin-Spalding, it is also prominent workforce development because present and potential investors want to have assured access to skilled workers. Another county will be developing a sister city relationship with a city in Japan.