Houston’s Japanese Deputy Consul General Mitsuru Murase discusses Japan-U.S. Relations

On November 18 the East Asia Institute was honored to host Deputy Consul General Mitsuru Murase from the Consulate General of Japan in Houston, who gave a lecture on Japan–U.S. relations. Murase covered topics ranging from Japan’s economy, the recent election of a new prime minister, and global issues. With the presence of San Antonio city officials, UTSA administrators, UTSA faculty and students, and guests from the San Antonio community, the lecture was the largest and best attended that the East Asian Institute has hosted.

According to Deputy Consul General Mitsuru Murase, Japan’s economy is the second largest in the world, next to that of the U.S. With the election of new Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of the Democratic Party of Japan (also known as DPJ) Japan makes a party change from its past Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). This change along with the U.S. 44th president named town ‘Obama’, in Fukui prefecture long before Obama came into office, as stated from Mr. Murase’s lecture, Japanese people are accepting change.

Mr. Murase also mentioned the security and prosperity of Japan and those of the international communities are interlocked. In global issues, Japan has aided the U.S. in the war in Iraq by dispatching troops and implementing billions of dollars of aid and debt relief. In Afghanistan, Japan has built over 550
Houston’s Japanese Deputy Consul General Mitsuru Murase addresses the guests at the reception prior to his lecture entitled “Japan-U.S Relations” on November 18, 2009 at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Left: UTSA President Ricardo Romo, UTSA East Asia Institute Director Donald Lien, Houston’s Japanese Deputy Consul General

Trivia questions about Japan

- Japan is the United States’ fourth biggest trading partner.
- The population of Japan is 128 million (vs. 303 million in the U.S.)
- The tallest mountain in Japan is Mt. Fuji (3776 m or 12388 ft.)
- The native religion of Japan is Shinto.
- The gate that separates the outside world and the shinto shrine is called “tori”. "
- The current Prime Minister of Japan is Mr. Yikio Hatoyama (elected in 2009)
- The current emperor of Japan is Akihito.
- The current era name in Japan is Heisei.
- It is 2009. It is also Heisie 21 in Japan.
- The flag of Japan is
- The four largest islands in Japan are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu.

Learn about Japan: http://web-japan.org/

Trained teachers as well as built medical clinics.

Japan’s stance on global warming is to reduce its greenhouse gas emission by 25% by 2020. According to Mr. Murase, Japan is committed to working with major countries on this issue and Japan’s new prime minister has expressed his determination on climate change and energy shortage.

Mr. Murase expressed not only the Japanese and the U.S. governments need to work together, so do the professional and civic groups, including the business sector and the youths. It is through mutual understanding and efforts that the inter-country relations can be fostered and improved.