

Florida Delegation, Southeast U.S./Japan Association's 11th Annual Japan-Florida Summit Hosted at Morikami

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Business, cultural and academic leaders came together this past month for the 11th annual Florida- Japan Summit presented by the Florida Delegation, Southeast U.S./Japan Association (SEUS/JAPAN) in partnership with Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens.

An ideal host location for this year's Summit, Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens aims to provide authentic Japanese cultural experiences that entertain, educate, and inspire locals and visitors to South Florida. Since the opening of its original Museum in 1977, Palm Beach County and the Board of Trustees of Morikami, Inc. have been partners in bringing Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens' services to the public.

The Park and building are owned and operated by Palm Beach County, which received the property as a gift from late Japanese farmer and Yamato colonist George Morikami. Morikami Inc., the non-profit arm of the Museum, provides cultural authenticity, financial and volunteer support through membership, donations, grants and other revenue-producing activities.

This year's Summit hosted 153 attendees and featured special guest speakers, including Florida Secretary of State Kenneth Detzner; the Honorable Shinji Nagashima, Consul General, Consulate General of Japan in Miami; Minister Hideaki Mizukoshi, Head of Chancery, Embassy of Japan, Washington D.C.; Mr. Randal Baker, President of Morikami Inc.'s Board of Trustees; and Keith Norden, Secretary-Treasurer, and Dave Woodward, Executive Director, SEUS/Japan.

The business panel included remarks by Enterprise Florida, Inc. COO Griff Salmon, who commented on his organization's business development activities with Japan. Griff discussed Japan's current state of business with the U.S. He noted Japan is Florida's sixth-largest trading partner with \$6.88 billion in merchandise trade in 2013, and Japanese companies created 21,900 Florida jobs in 2011, ranking Japan fourth among direct foreign investors.

In addition to the half-day summit program, attendees enjoyed a networking reception with welcoming notes by Palm Beach County Mayor Priscilla Taylor and Palm Beach County Commissioner Mary Lou Berger, as well as with special remarks by a visiting Wakayama Prefecture, Japan senior government official regarding the upcoming 20th anniversary of the State of Florida's official sister state relationship with Wakayama.



Founded in 1975, the mission of Florida Delegation, SEUS/Japan is to promote ties of trade, investment, tourism, education and friendship between Florida, Japan, and six other southeast U.S. states through an annual joint meeting program hosted in regular rotation by SEUS/Japan member states and Japan. Florida Delegation, SEUS/Japan has individual, non-profit and corporate membership programs open to all individuals, businesses and organizations interested in supporting Florida Delegation, SEUS/Japan's mission.

For more information about the Morikami, its exhibitions, programs and events, visit www.morikami.org or call 561-495-0233.