

**Japan Society of Northern California  
Annual Award of Honor Recipients  
1987-2025**

**Award of Honor Gala History**

Every year since 1987, the Society has honored distinguished individuals from both cultures at the Annual Award of Honor Gala. Awards are given to those who have worked to foster better American understanding of Japan and better United States-Japan relations. The first recipients of this award were Edwin O. Reischauer and Haru Matsukata Reischauer.

The complete list of recipients are as follows:

- 2025 His Excellency Fumio Kishida (Award of Honor), Hideaki Nishino (World Visionary Award), Hiroshi Kawano (Legacy Partner Award), Kei Kawai (Cultural Ambassador Award), Shinichi Inoue (Kakehashi Award), Nobuko Saito Cleary (Humanitarian Award)
- 2024 Koichiro Nakamura (Award of Honor) & Peanuts (Cultural Ambassador Award)
- 2023 YOSHIKI (Award of Honor), Hello Kitty (Cultural Ambassador Award) & Ira Ehrenpreis, Founder/Managing Partner, DBL Partners (Visionary Award)
- 2022 William F. Hagerty (Award of Honor), U.S. Senator & Former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Takuya Okada, Honorary Chairman, AEON (Humanitarian Award)  
Akiko Nakajo, Managing Director, YouTube Partnerships Japan, Google Japan G.K. (Visionary Award)
- 2021 Stéphane Bancel, Chief Executive Officer, Moderna, Inc. & Christophe Weber, Chief Executive Officer, Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited
- 2020 His Excellency, Shinzo Abe (Award of Honor)  
Ambassador Deborah L. Birx, MD, White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator & Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (Humanitarian Award)
- 2019 Ben Yoneyama, Chairman, YONEX CO., LTD. & Carl and Yurie Pascarella Executive Advisor, TPG Capital
- 2018 Hiroaki Nakanishi, Executive Chairman, Hitachi and Chairman, Keidanren & William Perry, Former Secretary of Defense
- 2017 David Pearson, CEO, Opus One & Yuzo Kayama, Actor, Artist, & Singer
- 2016 Hiroshi Mikitani, Rakuten, Inc. & Hayao Miyazaki, Animation Director Studio Ghibli (World Imaginator Award)
- 2015 Marc Benioff, Salesforce & Haruo Murase, Canon Marketing Japan Inc. Nobuyuki Tsujii, Van Cliburn Gold Medal Winner (Music Ambassador)
- 2014 Ambassador John V. Roos & Ken Watanabe, Actor and Humanitarian MUFG Union Bank, N.A. (Visionary Award)
- 2013 Margrit Biever Mondavi, Robert Mondavi Winery &



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- Kenzo Tsujimoto, Kenzo Estate, Capcom Co., Ltd, Capcom U.S.A., Inc.  
Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, 2012 Nobel Prize Winner (World Visionary Award)
- 2012 Georges Desvaux (on behalf of McKinsey & Company)
- 2011 Japanese Ambassador to U.S. Ryozo Kato, William H. Neukom (on behalf of the San Francisco Giants) & Lewis Wolff (on behalf of the Oakland Athletics)  
Masanori Murakami (Lifetime Achievement)  
Sadaharu Oh (Lifetime Achievement)
- 2010 U.S. Ambassador to Japan J. Thomas Schieffer & Takahiro Moriguchi, JP Morgan Japan  
Hatsuro “Hats” Aizawa (Lifetime Achievement)
- 2009 Japanese Ambassador to U.S. Shunji Yanai & Toichi Takenaka, Takenaka Corporation
- 2008 Sakie Fukushima, Korn/Ferry International & Kathy Matsui, Goldman Sachs Japan (Women in Business Gala)  
Richard Heggie (Lifetime Achievement)
- 2007 Yuzaburo Mogi, Kikkoman  
Philip Kan Gotanda, Playwright (Artistic Achievement)
- 2006 Yoshihiko Miyauchi, Orix & A.W. Clausen, Bank of America  
Alexander D. Calhoun (Lifetime Achievement)
- 2005 Tatsuro Toyoda, Toyota Foundation & Scott Cook, Intuit  
Atsuhiko Tateuchi, Tateuchi Foundation (Humanitarian Award)
- 2004 Keiji Tachikawa, NTT Docomo
- 2003 Nobuyuki Idei, Sony Corporation
- 2002 Walt Disney Corporation/Oriental Land Company  
Osamu Yamada (Lifetime Achievement)
- 2001 Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta (On behalf of the Japanese American Community)
- 2000 Yotaro Kobayashi, Fuji Xerox
- 1999 James C. Morgan, Applied Materials
- 1998 Norio Ohga, Sony Corporation
- 1997 Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa
- 1996 Dr. Donald Keene, Columbia University
- 1995 U.S. Ambassador to Japan Michael H. Armacost & Japanese Ambassador to U.S.  
Nobuo Matsunaga
- 1994 James Clavell, Novelist & Jesse Takamiyama, Sumo Wrestler



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- 1993 Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone & Secretary of State George P. Schultz
- 1992 Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees & Dr. Robert Scalapino, National Committee on United States-China Relations
- 1991 U.S. Ambassador to Japan Michael Mansfield & Ambassador (and former Consul General in San Francisco) Hiroshi Kitamura
- 1990 U.S. Ambassador to Japan Robert Ingersoll
- 1989 Dr. Robert Ward, Stanford University
- 1988 Japanese Ambassador to U.S. Yoshio Okawara
- 1987 U.S. Ambassador to Japan Edwin & Haru Matsukata Reischauer