



Japan-Alabama Ties



Politics

Political relations have a long history, going back to the establishment of the Honorary Consul of Japan position in Mobile in 1902. The Alabama Development Office opened an office in Tokyo in 1980. Alabama state government policy remains eager to attract foreign investment to the state. The state government is active in the Annual Meeting of the Japan-U.S. Southeast Association, and seeks to expand ties with Japan not just in the economic field, but in a broad range of areas.

Economy

Alabama has attracted Japanese industry for years. This is shown by the fact that Japanese-affiliated companies have invested \$2.9 billion in Alabama, where 69 Japanese-affiliated companies currently operate. These companies together employ 14,475 workers. Some major Japanese firms in Alabama are Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, Good Year Dunlop Tire North America, Sony Magnetic Products of America, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Alabama, Rheem Manufacturing, Daikin America, Inc., and JVC America, Inc. Alabama's exports in 2002 amounted to \$513.6 million, making Japan its 4th largest export market.

Cultural and Educational Organizations

Asian Collection at Birmingham Museum of Art
Japan House at Children's Hands-On Museum in Tuscaloosa
Japan Society of Birmingham
Japan-America Society of Alabama in Birmingham
Japanese Garden in Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Japanese Supplemental Schools in Birmingham, Huntsville and Tuscaloosa

Sister-cities

Anniston-Shingu-cho (Hyogo) (Since July 26, 1986)
Birmingham-Hitachi-shi (Ibaraki) (Since April 23, 1982)
Birmingham-Maebashi-shi (Gunma) (Since October 21, 1998)
Dothan-Sakado-shi (Saitama) (Since March 26, 1988)
Mobile-Ichihara-shi (Chiba) (Since November 10, 1993)
Montevallo-Echizen (Fukui) (Since October, 2008)
Tuscaloosa-Narashino-shi (Chiba) (Since April 26, 1986)

Japanese Studies

Birmingham Southern College (Major in Asian Studies; exchange program with Kansai Gaidai University)
Samford University (Minor in Japanese)
University of Alabama at Birmingham (Japanese classes)
University of Alabama at Huntsville (Japanese classes)
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa (Major in International Studies with a concentration on Asia; minor in Japanese; exchange program with Kansai Gaidai University and Chiba University)

Annual Events

Tuscaloosa Sakura Festival (March) (since 1986)
Sakura Festival in Birmingham (March)
Japanese Festival in Huntsville (May) (since 1990)