

2026 Presidential Guiding Principles

Daisuke Kato

National President

JCI Japan

0. Introduction

When I was in my third year of junior high school, my family visited Asahikawa in Hokkaido. Without being told the purpose of the trip, we arrived in Asahikawa as if on a family vacation, only to find the city bustling with people in suits. It turned out that the 2002 JCI Japan National Convention was being held there. That year, my father was graduating from the Junior Chamber and serving as Executive Vice President of JCI Japan. We had come to attend the convention's ceremonies and the graduation ceremony.

At the signal marking the start of the graduation ceremony, the graduates gathered on and around the stage. Standing at the center of the stage was my father, who had been selected to deliver the graduation speech. His speech included reflections on his life in the JC, a heartfelt message to fellow members that only a graduate could give, and a personal message to our family. He said: "I missed many family events—sports days, school visits. I couldn't be the father I should have been, and I made my children feel lonely. I'm sorry. From now on, I'll return to my family as a father." While apologizing, he also expressed his hopes for the future. I remember our whole family being moved to tears. Indeed, back then, he would often return home briefly in the evening only to change back into his suit and go out again. Even on weekends and holidays, he spent little time with us. He sometimes left home for several days with a large bag. I clearly remember how my father was absent on the days that mattered most to me as a child, and how lonely that made me feel.

However, attending that graduation ceremony changed how I viewed my father. It was the first time I saw him delivering a speech before such a large audience. Seeing adults moved to tears by his words stirred emotions in me that I couldn't put into words and left a deep impression that I still remember vividly. Perhaps it was at that moment, when my heart was so profoundly touched, that I began to aspire to one day join the Junior Chamber and become someone like my father.

There was a senior member who joined the Junior Chamber in 2002 and attended that same

convention for the first time. Hearing my father's graduation speech ignited a passion in him. Inspired, he set a goal: "Someday, I want to deliver my own graduation speech on that stage." He remained active in JC without pause until his graduation year. That year, he too served as Executive Vice President of JCI Japan, fulfilling the dream he had since joining, and gave his graduation speech at the National Convention.

Another senior member, similarly inspired by that speech, also became highly motivated and set clear goals. A few years ago, he served as an advisor to JCI Japan and delivered his graduation speech at the National Convention.

The Junior Chamber has continued its mission through inspiration passed from person to person, and the passion born from such encounters. Have you met someone through your JC activities whom you admire or respect? And have you become someone whom others look up to as a role model? I hope you will continue the JC movement with a spirit of self-improvement, so that you may become the kind of member who passes the baton to the next generation.

As I engage in JC activities, I hold this phrase close to heart:

"That earth's great treasure lies in human personality;

And that service to humanity is the best work of life."

These words come from the JCI Creed and they tell us that service to humanity is not just about offering direct aid to those in need or facing hardship. Rather, it is about addressing the underlying issues and structures of society to create a better world. That is our most important mission as JC members.

To fulfill that mission, we JAYCEEs must boldly take on new challenges with high aspirations and continue to enhance the value of the JC movement. In every era, we must lead the way in society and be at the forefront of reform. Even if we fail along the way, every challenge is a meaningful step toward the future. What matters is our unwavering willingness to keep moving forward. And supporting that challenge are hearts that are true: honest and pure, free from all deception and pretense. That is why we must be our authentic selves and devote ourselves wholeheartedly to others.

When each of us truly loves our homeland, cherishes our local communities, and faces social challenges with a strong sense of purpose, our movement will gain the power to change society. It will lead us closer to creating a bright and prosperous future. In doing so, our efforts will become a beacon of hope, and the Junior Chamber will undoubtedly become an

indispensable presence throughout Japan.

1. Brand Management

JCI Japan, as stated in its Constitution, conducts various movements and projects with the purpose of coordinating Local Organizations throughout Japan, developing nationwide-scale initiatives, promoting the interests of the Japanese people and its regular members, and contributing to the prosperity and peace of the world.

Among these, it is the "nationwide-scale initiatives" that constitute one of the most valuable outcomes that the JCI brand offers to society. That is precisely why I believe it is essential to focus on brand management—from the perspective of how we create the value of our movement and how we can maximize its impact.

Brand management refers to a series of strategic activities aimed at building, maintaining, and enhancing the value of a brand—whether it be a company, organization, product, or service. Here, the term “brand” does not simply refer to a logo or name. It represents the recognition and image people hold in their hearts about a company or product. The purpose of brand management is to deliberately shape and elevate that image.

In some companies, brand management serves as the foundation for success even before product development or sales begin. First, they conduct market research to understand consumer needs—who is seeking what, and what problems the product can solve. Then, through competitive analysis, they identify how their product differs from others, and what points of differentiation can be emphasized. Taking current trends into account, they define the target demographic, product value, and concept, and formulate a sales strategy. This strategy includes advertisements through commercials, social media, flyers, PR campaigns, and word-of-mouth. Then you start thinking about how to communicate what makes the product attractive and share its message. By carefully following each step, they can reduce risks and achieve highly accurate product development and sales.

We also follow similar procedures when building our movement, discussing agenda items in meetings. However, within this process, aren't we focusing too much on the background and purpose of implementation, and the methods for achieving our objectives? Just as companies develop sales strategies to sell their products, we should place greater emphasis on the perspective of 'to whom and how we deliver our message.' The true value of our movement cannot be adequately conveyed through self-satisfied communications or merely posting information on social media. We need to consider strategies for making our movement

valuable to our target audience, gaining society's empathy, and spreading throughout the community. And through our movement, which we deploy with confidence, let us further enhance the brand value of the Junior Chamber and demonstrate our firm *raison d'être* in society.

2. Creating a Happy Society

The "bright and prosperous society" stated in the JCI Japan Creed serves as our guiding vision in striving for a better society. It is the fundamental philosophy behind our movements, adapting to changes in times and society. I believe that in order to achieve this goal, we must first build a society in which people can truly feel "happy" in their daily lives. That is why I aim to realize an ideal society by first focusing on the creation of a "happy society" as a necessary step toward achieving a bright and prosperous one.

To realize a happy society, we must address the challenges Japan faces and embrace a transformation in the values demanded by the next generation.

Although Japan became one of the world's leading economic powers following its period of rapid economic growth, it entered a prolonged phase of stagnation known as the "Lost 30 Years" beginning in the 1990s. While achieving material wealth, Japan ranked only 55th in the United Nations World Happiness Report in 2025—the lowest among G7 countries. Compared to other nations, the Japanese people do not report a high level of happiness. This may suggest a growing interest in non-economic indicators of well-being, such as emotional richness and the quality of interpersonal relationships, rather than economic growth alone.

Moreover, Japan is one of the fastest-aging countries in the world, facing a rapidly declining birthrate and population. By 2040, it is projected that one in three Japanese citizens will be a late-stage elderly person. Issues such as a shrinking workforce, rising social security costs, and increased elderly isolation challenge the sustainability of society. Ensuring a hopeful future for children and youth requires urgent efforts to make our society more happy and fulfilling.

To create a truly happy society, a simple, reactive approach to existing problems will not suffice. A paradigm shift in societal values and a structural transformation toward a sustainable future for the next generation are essential.

What is required for this shift toward a happy society?

The answer lies in a multifaceted approach, implemented at the national, regional, corporate, and individual levels. It is essential to achieve a balanced combination of economic prosperity, emotional well-being, social connection, quality education, and environmental sustainability. As JCI members, we must not turn a blind eye to reality, but rather act with a strong sense of urgency.

To enrich the human spirit, we must enhance emotional well-being. This includes improving support systems for stress management at workplaces, schools, and homes; expanding access to mental health care; and preventing overwork and loneliness. From the perspective of work-life balance, we need to promote flexible working options such as curbing long working hours and encouraging the use of paid leave, thus shifting societal values toward seeing work as a source of life enrichment and happiness.

In terms of education, we must move away from rote learning and toward education that fosters creativity and empathy. This includes building an educational environment that nurtures children's self-esteem and equips them with the tools to pursue happiness in society. Furthermore, reviving local communities, reinforcing mutual support systems among residents and regions—particularly in aging societies—will help create inclusive communities that combat social isolation, promote regional revitalization, and foster local pride.

JCI Japan has continuously promoted movements that aim to build an inclusive society that respects diversity. These efforts advocate for a society that values individuals of all genders, abilities, family registries, ages, and LGBTQ+ identities. We work to eliminate prejudice, foster understanding of minority groups, and build fair, accessible social systems that allow everyone to participate equally.

The initiatives we undertake are timely and appropriate responses to make Japanese society today a happier one. That is why we must devote even greater energy to brand management, ensuring that our movement resonates with people and draws in new collaborators. As our initiatives take root across society, the people of Japan will experience greater happiness—and we will move closer to realizing a truly happy society.

3. Realizing a Safe, Secure, and Stable Japanese Society

When I was working at a ryokan in Zao Onsen, Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture, I experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake. Even now, fourteen years later, I cannot forget the fear I felt at that time.

Although I was in my early twenties, I had no knowledge of how to prepare for disasters or how to respond in an emergency. It was only after the earthquake that I truly understood the importance of maintaining disaster awareness during normal times. I believe I am not alone—many others likely had a similar realization as a result of the disaster.

To me, a “strong Japan” is a nation capable of protecting both individual lives and the lives of its citizens—a country where safety and peace of mind allow everyone to live securely. Without safety, there can be no peace of mind; without peace of mind, there can be no stability.

As threats from disasters and national security issues increase, the question becomes: how do we build not only physical defense but also a sense of mental and emotional security among the population? There is no final destination in achieving complete safety and peace of mind—it is an ongoing pursuit. That is why we must live our lives with constant awareness of the importance of safety and security.

Japan has faced numerous natural disasters, including earthquakes, typhoons, and torrential rains, making it one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world.

Most recently, the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake occurred, and many affected people are still forced to live under difficult conditions. At the same time, there are those continuing recovery efforts on the ground and others providing support from outside the disaster area.

While we cannot prevent natural disasters, there are many preparations we can make in advance to minimize their impact. At the personal and household level, this includes storing emergency supplies, confirming evacuation sites and routes, securing furniture to prevent tipping, and ensuring access to reliable information. At the community level, participation in disaster drills and strengthened cooperation with neighbors is essential. At the government level, infrastructure development, promotion of disaster education, and improved systems are key.

The foundation of disaster preparedness lies in self-help, mutual assistance, and public support. Protecting yourself and your family, helping your neighbors and community, and receiving support from public institutions—each of these pillars is essential. When each of us considers and acts on what we can do to prepare, it not only protects lives but also contributes to community safety.

JCI Japan has worked to strengthen disaster-response networks, formulate Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), and promote public-private partnerships to enhance regional resilience based on the realities of each region. While community-based disaster preparedness and public-private collaboration are critically important, we must also revisit

our own households and start with personal readiness. We must increase disaster awareness in times of peace so that every family member can act appropriately in an emergency. For this, we propose the introduction of Family Continuity Plans (FCPs).

FCP refers to a concrete action plan for ensuring family safety during disasters, created in advance. It is also a process of strengthening each family member's disaster awareness through conversations and information sharing within the household. To create a disaster-resilient society, preparedness must not stop at the community level—it must begin at home. After all, the home is the true front line of society.

Another indispensable element in building a strong Japan is national security.

Japan must protect the lives, livelihoods, and society of its people by establishing secure relations with neighboring countries and actively contributing to international peacekeeping efforts.

National security refers to establishing measures and systems to ensure the safety of countries, organizations and individuals. It includes not only military defense but also political, economic, and social dimensions. It is the foundation for a society where people can live with peace of mind.

To contribute to this effort, we must first enhance public understanding and cooperation in national security. In our workplaces, we can support economic security through economic activities. Companies can implement a variety of measures to mitigate risks arising from economic activities, such as promoting domestic supply chains, strengthening control of sensitive technologies, and improving cybersecurity. They can also contribute to social security through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts like addressing environmental issues, supporting local communities, and ensuring employee safety.

JCI Japan has contributed to security through disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and peace-building initiatives as part of our broader JC Movement. With our extensive international network and numerous Jaycees across the Asia-Pacific region, we have the capacity to engage in dialogue with neighboring countries through civilian diplomacy; fostering trust and cooperation; and by solving problems and building cooperative frameworks. Additionally, our accumulated disaster preparedness manuals, developed through past relief efforts, can be shared with and utilized by JCI members overseas.

Through our economic and social activities and the JC Movement, we can contribute to many aspects of national and social security. By taking the lead as private citizens, we can help build a safer, more secure, and more stable society.

4. Developing the International Community through the strength of Japan

To “develop the international community through the strength of Japan” does not simply refer to physical or financial support. It signifies an approach to deepening Japan’s contributions to the world by sharing its unique culture and values, thereby enhancing its global influence. In other words, it means proactively contributing to the development of the international community by leveraging Japan’s distinctive strengths.

Japan possesses a unique culture that is highly regarded around the world. From anime, manga, and video games to music, cuisine, fashion, craftsmanship, and traditional arts, Japan’s aesthetic sense and values are respected globally and have had a significant influence across diverse fields.

Furthermore, aspects of our daily culture and behavior that we often take for granted are considered precious in many parts of the world. For example, the spirit of *mottainai* (respect for resources) and *omotenashi* (hospitality) are values that have been cultivated and refined through Japan’s efforts to overcome domestic social challenges, representing a deep sense of wisdom and ethics.

Many countries around the world today face similar challenges to those Japan has experienced, but have yet to find effective solutions. If we can share Japan’s cultural values and spirit with the world and help address these challenges, the significance of Japan’s presence will grow, and its role in the international community will become even more firmly established.

One example of such international contribution is the *SMILE by WATER* project initiated by JCI Japan. This project began with the goal of addressing water and sanitation issues in the Asia region. It has since evolved into *SMILE by ACTION*, which aims to provide even broader support.

SMILE by ACTION seeks to address environmental challenges in developing countries across Asia by exploring sustainable forms of assistance and taking concrete actions that contribute to the international community. Today, however, the issues we face are no longer limited to Asia, as the world now confronts a vast array of social challenges that require global solutions. Each of us must recognize our role as stakeholders and, as a Japanese civil society organization, work toward solutions by leveraging cross-border collaboration and networks.

To that end, civil diplomacy is essential.

Civil diplomacy refers to diplomatic activities carried out not by governments but by private citizens and organizations. Through various initiatives, the Junior Chamber can engage with JCI members across the world. This form of diplomacy contributes to building trust and promoting mutual understanding among nations.

In today's world, where peace is threatened by invasions and conflicts, it is more important than ever for us—the Junior Chamber, which upholds the *JCI Vision* of being the world's foremost global network—to take the initiative in promoting civil diplomacy. No other private organization possesses the network and capacity to take action on this global issue of peace the way we do.

The 2026 JCI Asia Pacific Conference will be held in Niigata, Japan. JCI Japan will fully support the event and, under the principle of “achieving world peace” as stated in our Constitution, will ensure the conference is not just an international meeting, but a milestone in accelerating the movement toward peace.

In particular, the Global Peace Summit, launched by JCI Japan in 2023, has played an important role in promoting civil diplomacy with National Organizations in the Asia-Pacific. We will continue to deepen these efforts, build trust and cooperation throughout the area, and contribute to achieving lasting peace.

Moreover, it is not enough to deliver our message abroad—we must also promote the importance of peace within Japan. By sharing the current state of global affairs, we hope to provide opportunities for children—the leaders of the future—to think about and take action for world peace.

One of JCI Japan's most internationally respected programs is the JCI Academy. This academy brings together next-generation leaders from around the world and serves as a valuable opportunity not only to deepen civil diplomacy, but also to foster international initiatives for solving social issues and advancing world peace. Let us fully utilize the potential of the JCI Academy and accelerate our movement to make the world a better place.

5. Creating Japan's Future from the Local Communities

We, the members of the Junior Chamber, have pledged in the JC Declaration to “build sustainable communities by solving societal challenges.”

So then, what must we do to realize this vision?

Across Japan, we face a wide range of societal challenges, and resolving all of them overnight will be far from easy. Moreover, the initiatives being carried out by local Junior Chambers aimed at tackling these challenges cannot address everything—they, too, have limitations. That is precisely why it is vital to clearly define a shared context and purpose, and to persistently continue our efforts, even if it means changing our methods.

Today, Japan has 10 District Councils, 48 Bloc Councils, and 666 Local Organizations. If all these chapters across the nation were to engage in a sustained and coordinated initiative under a common awareness of the issues, we could make a significant impact on the people of Japan. The power of our movement would multiply, and the pace of progress toward solutions would accelerate.

As such a common theme, I propose that we engage in efforts toward achieving carbon neutrality.

Carbon neutrality refers to initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions—especially carbon dioxide—to net zero. This is not only about environmental protection. It is a critical action to protect every foundation of our lives—our livelihoods, economy, health, and national security—from the effects of climate change, which are already a reality.

One striking fact is that over 15% of Japan's greenhouse gas emissions come from households. Achieving carbon neutrality is not about perfection—it requires creativity and consistent efforts. Starting at the household level will enrich all of Japan. In short, simple efforts at home directly contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases. That is why it is essential to begin carbon neutrality efforts in our everyday lives.

The first step is for us to correctly understand what carbon neutrality means. We must take the initiative to reflect on our lifestyles, research and discuss within our families, and make carbon neutrality feel like a personal matter. Our daily decisions and actions hold the key to building sustainable communities. The home is the frontline of carbon neutrality.

Furthermore, it is our responsibility as adults living in this era to preserve and pass down safe, secure, and prosperous communities to our children and future generations. Household initiatives serve as environmental education opportunities for children and youth, making the home truly "a place where the future is nurtured." Let us view carbon neutrality not as a burden, but as an opportunity. If we, Junior Chamber International, launch coordinated and sustained campaigns nationwide, we can become Japan's leading organization in promoting carbon neutrality.

For instance, if each Local Organization were to measure and visualize the reduction in household greenhouse gas emissions annually, we could more effectively convey the significance of our efforts to the public. These small actions, accumulated over time, will surely lead to significant change. Let us take small steps together—and transform them into a powerful force for Japan's future.

Furthermore, the Japan in which we live is blessed with beauty in every season. Surrounded by *satoyama* (woodland areas), the sea, and abundant natural resources, our regions have cultivated prosperous agriculture and fisheries, traditional culture, historic heritage, and countless local treasures and heroes.

Yet, even residents are often unaware of the appeal and latent resources close at hand. To pass down even more attractive regions to future generations, we must first help local residents recognize and appreciate these values, and deepen their love for the places they call home.

No matter how wonderful a place may be, if its value is not recognized, people will not feel pride or affection for it. In order to share and uncover its charm, it is essential to rediscover and experience the region's strengths together with local residents, and transform existing attractions into even greater ones.

To that end, we as JC members must stand at the forefront of our communities, share their merits, enhance their current assets, and uncover new ones. By widely disseminating these new charms, they become valuable local assets, and our communities will evolve into attractive and sustainable regions. Let us create the future of Japan by embracing the uniqueness of our regions—for the communities we love.

6. Developing Human Capital Is an Investment in the Future

During my years of compulsory education, I was fortunate to participate in various projects organized by the JCI Handa. Through those experiences, I gained invaluable learning opportunities and a broader perspective—something not easily obtained through school education alone.

Human capital development is not limited to children. For the younger and millennial generations, opportunities to expand their potential and grow are critically important, and this is an indispensable theme when considering sustainable social development and the future of local communities.

I use the term “human capital” rather than “human resources.” This is because I believe that each person’s value and potential is a treasure, and their growth becomes an irreplaceable asset for the society of the future.

Just as local Junior Chambers across Japan are actively engaged in initiatives to nurture human capital, JCI Japan has also identified this as a priority area and has been continuously developing diverse programs in this field.

The Positive Learning Program, the first initiative in Japan to utilize generative AI as a supportive educational tool, where businesses and local residents collaborate to create learning environments.

The National High School Policy Koshien, which empowers youth to consider Japan’s future through current issues, develop policy proposals, and deliver them to the government—cultivating awareness of their role as sovereign citizens.

The JCI Japan Global Youth Ambassador Development Project, a program aimed at fostering youth who will contribute to global society by undergoing both domestic and international training to pursue lasting world peace.

The JC Cup Youth Soccer Tournament, which instills the spirit of a “good loser” in children who will shoulder the future of their communities—helping nurture independent individuals with moral integrity.

The TOYP Project, which discovers exceptional young individuals who bring about positive cycles in society and have the potential for long-lasting impact.

The Value Design Contest, which encourages the creation of new business ideas based on value-creation management, with the aim of transforming Japan from the local level and building a society respected worldwide.

All of these initiatives play an essential role in nurturing future leaders and those who will drive their communities forward. We intend to continue these human capital development projects, updating their content to match the times—such as with the new “SEED Division” introduced to the TOYP Project in 2025.

Nurturing people does not yield immediate results. But it is a “long-term investment in the future” that, over time, generates profound value and success. Our human capital development initiatives are vital for shaping the future of society and our communities. Let us move forward with confidence, expanding our human capital development efforts throughout Japan.

At the same time, people across Japan live their daily lives while grappling with numerous issues—one of the most urgent being the shortage of human capital in the workforce.

Many businesses in local communities struggle with workforce shortages.

As population outflow and declining birthrates continue, an overwhelming shortage of labor is growing—and in many regions, the need for foreign workers is increasing. Some areas are seeing a rise in foreign residents and companies employing them. While globalization has already become part of our daily lives, can we say that our communities are truly ready to welcome and support global talent?

Global human capital refers to individuals who can achieve success even in cross-border business environments—especially those with strong language skills and intercultural communication abilities. As more companies face challenges in hiring and developing such talent for overseas markets, the demand will only continue to grow.

To address this, we must first foster intercultural understanding and communication skills, secure talented individuals with the language proficiency needed in future business environments, and raise global human capital who will be indispensable in the next generation. By conveying the current situation of our regions to the people of the future, identifying the types of talent we will need, and preparing for the volatility of today's society, let us build the global leaders of tomorrow.

7. Developing Members and Organizations to Maximize the JC Movement

This year marks my 14th year as a member of the Junior Chamber. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to serve in many roles. Looking back, the most quintessential JC experience for me was serving in the JCI Asia Pacific Development Council (APDC) during the 2015–2016 and 2020–2021 terms.

APDC stands for the **Asia Pacific Development Council**. Its mission is to establish JCI organizations in countries within the Asia-Pacific Area where they do not yet exist, as well as to support the growth of existing National or Local Organizations that are in decline, and to develop JC members. This mission is rooted in the very origin of the Junior Chamber, with a focus on “development.” As outlined in the **JCI Mission**, our organization exists to empower young people to create positive change and provide members with opportunities for development and growth.

During my time with APDC, my assigned country was Timor-Leste. What struck me most

there was that, even though many local people were unaware of JCI's existence, there were still numerous university students who resonated with the JC philosophy and wanted to join the movement.

Some JC members say that membership growth is difficult due to a lack of name recognition. However, through my APDC experience, I came to believe that recognition is not necessarily essential for expanding membership. The desire of young people to gather, empower themselves, and change society through their own efforts is something that exists in every era and every place.

I believe this same truth applies within Japan as well.

The Junior Chamber is an organization united by shared aspirations for creating a bright and prosperous society—an organization powered by the individual strengths of its members. To ensure we continue being such a compelling collective, it is vital that we grow our membership. We must first understand why membership expansion is necessary and then act with a sense of ownership and responsibility.

We often realize the true value of joining JC only after we begin participating in its activities. From the outside, JC may seem vague or hard to grasp. To attract others, we must embody and express a clear JC identity—even if just one strong defining element. Let's pursue the form of JC that today's young business professionals are truly seeking.

I believe one answer lies in the concept of "business opportunities."

Roughly 90% of JC members are either current or future business leaders. Through JC, I have gained valuable knowledge, networks, and experiences that benefit my business. Providing more learning opportunities through JC that foster growth as a business leader is exactly what today's young professionals seek. As a result, young entrepreneurs living in each region will naturally grow more interested in JC, leading to increased membership.

As more JC members with shared ideals gather, the JC movement will gain momentum and evolve into a sustainable organization. Let us begin by reaching out to young professionals around us and sharing the value and appeal of the JC movement.

When we talk about the JC movement, we must not forget the concept of "development." I believe there are three major areas of development within JCI:

- 1. Personal development** – this refers to human capital development and leadership development. Enhancing qualities like public speaking, presentation, leadership, and management skills, as well as increasing knowledge and responsiveness to community

and societal issues. JCI programs are powerful tools to support this.

2. **Community development** – Our initiatives aimed at improving the future of our communities. JCI Japan operates “Gian Pocket,” a national platform for sharing project proposals implemented by Local Organizations across Japan, enabling the creation of even more compelling initiatives.
3. **Organizational development** – Strengthening our structure, expanding membership, and improving operational methods. As we run our organization, it is essential that our foundation is solid. Most of our funding comes from membership dues. How we translate that funding into meaningful projects that give back to the community must be considered not only by the project creators but also from an objective third-party perspective.

To build high-quality movements, we need high-quality operational foundations. Both those who lead the movement and those who support it must grow together. An organization is a collection of individuals. To enhance organizational strength, active participation and deep interpersonal connections among JC members are indispensable.

By engaging not only for our own sake but also by exchanging opinions and understanding one another with fellow JC members, we build trust and further strengthen our organization. Such an organization will be capable of leading powerful movements and contributing to regional development. Let us strive to find the best answers as a Junior Chamber, and build a robust organization with highly effective operations.

8. Conclusion

"Hey, grandson! Are you living as a cool, sharp guy? Just coasting along will leave you in the red. Are you planting the seeds of joy? Taking care of the buds that'll bloom tomorrow? Don't be a man who can't see what's ahead." These are words my late grandfather wrote and left for me in calligraphy.

Since joining the Junior Chamber in Handa, I have learned a great deal through JC activities: to reflect on myself and strive for self-improvement, to cultivate compassion beyond myself, to act not only for the present but also for the future, and to express my feelings for the community where I was born and raised.

People grow through learning.

If you stop learning, your growth stops as well.

Persistence is power.

The opportunities offered by Junior Chamber can ignite motivation from one person to another, fostering personal growth and sometimes providing a powerful connection to the world. Given that JCI has an age limit of 40, we should approach each year with purpose, embracing challenges and making the most of our precious youth without wasting time. Through the JCI movement, which offers continuous learning and diverse opportunities, we should strive for self-improvement. I believe that self-growth is the key to creating a brighter, richer, and happier future for Japan and our communities.

Now, JAYCEES, let us bring about change with our hands and hearts, pour forth the power of hope with all our strength, and together create a happy future.

For the future of beloved Japan—let us challenge ourselves with true hearts, toward a Japan overflowing with hope and happiness.