



Building Japan–America Relationships Since 1909

To all our JASSC members and friends,

I'm honored to be your new Executive Director. I could never dream that as a boy growing up west of Denver, Colorado I would someday even be considered for such a position.

So I became interested in Japan when I was studying business at the University of Colorado in the early 1980s, and Japanese business practices like "kaizen" were very hot topics. After graduating, I lived and worked in Gunma Japan for three years where I taught English to a wide variety of Japanese individuals and businesses. I loved teaching, and became close friends with many of my students, and even closer to a fine young Japanese lady, who for some reason, agreed to marry me and move to Colorado so I could attend graduate business school at Denver University.

At DU I focused on accounting, and after graduation took a job at an international public accounting firm in Los Angeles, where I was able to focus on international taxation. I've worked in this area for various firms over the past 25 years, where I finished my public accounting career as a partner at a large regional firm.

I've had a relationship with JASSC for about ten years now: First as a member, then governor, and then as a board member. I think that experience will be valuable in my current position, as I already know some of you, and am familiar with our Society. I am looking forward to meeting and working with all of you!

Stephen M. Rickert Executive Director

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Japan America Society of Southern California