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Japan Native And West Plano Resident Helps Raise \$690,000 For Earthquake Victims in Dallas' Japanese Sister City



Pictured left to right: ORIX staff Jim Thompsom, Carol Greene and Hideto Nishitani (credit: Robert Greeson)

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West Plano resident and Japan native Hideto Nishitani knows what it's like to live through a harrowing earthquake. When a large earthquake hit his hometown of Osaka in 1995, it was a week before he knew if family had survived the disaster.

So, when this spring's earthquake and tsunami devastated Dallas' sister city Sendai, home to a large office of his employer, ORIX USA, it was only natural that Nishitani stepped in to help.

Nishitani, deputy president of ORIX USA, has been instrumental in helping the ORIX Foundation rally support for victims in Sendai. Thanks to ORIX USA employees, the foundation has raised more than \$690,000 for a local fund in Sendai that is helping disaster victims rebuild their lives.

Sendai is Dallas' International Friendship City, and ORIX USA's parent company ORIX Corporation has major offices there. The coastal city of Sendai was the closest in Japan to the 8.9-magnitude earthquake's epicenter, and its coastal plain was almost completely destroyed by the tsunami.

"We are so grateful that none of our ORIX colleagues in Sendai were among the missing or dead, but so many others were devastated by this disaster," said Nishitani who used to work in the Sendai offices. "At last count, there were more than 4,000 dead and missing in Sendai alone, and thousands more are without homes, schools, electricity, running water and other basic necessities."

contributor information

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The grant from ORIX Foundation is being directed to the Disaster Victim Fund set up by then City of Sendai's Public Health & Welfare Bureau to support its residents as they rebuild their lives. ORIX Foundation identified the municipal fund as the best way to ensure its grant would be put to work quickly and effectively in the local Sendai community, after consulting with both ORIX Corporation's Social Contributions Fund, headquartered in Tokyo, and the Japan America Society of Dallas-Fort Worth.

"ORIX employees and the city of Dallas have a strong connection to Sendai, and when a crisis like this happens, it's time for compassion and generosity to transcend borders," said Jim Thompson, president & founding director of ORIX Foundation and president & CEO of ORIX USA. "When we saw the devastation, we wanted to do our part to help the people of Sendai overcome the disaster. Even Japan's significant resources will not be enough to reach every corner impacted by the earthquake and tsunami."

ORIX Foundation has raised \$692,155 to date for the relief effort, including \$454,120 from employees of ORIX USA and its subsidiaries, including Houlihan Lokey, Mariner Investment Group and Red Capital. In response to its employees' generosity, ORIX USA donated an additional \$238,035 in matching funds to the Japan Relief Fund.

Those who wish to donate to ORIX Foundation's Japan Relief Fund can do so at www.orixfoundation.org by designating "JAPAN RELIEF" in the special instructions section.

ORIX Foundation is a charitable foundation sponsored and managed by ORIX USA Corporation and its employees to advance education, strengthen communities and improve lives. The organization takes a holistic approach to this mission, largely funding local charities that promote the health, welfare and education of children, families, military personnel and veterans. The foundation awards direct grants to not-for-profit organizations and matches the charitable contributions of ORIX USA employees up to \$5,000 each year. Since it was founded in 2009, ORIX Foundation has contributed to 100 organizations primarily in ORIX USA's headquarters region of North Texas. For information, visit www.orixfoundation.org

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