

Japan on Georgia's Mind: Carrying on Everlasting Friendship

Panelist Bios



Mayor Phil Best was elected to serve the Citizens of Dublin in November of 1999. Since his election, he has chaired on the Economic Development Committee, President of the Georgia Municipal Associations 13th District, and been appointed to the Governor's board of work force initiative. Phil has also served on Laurens County Board of Health, GMEBS Board of Trustees, and the Military Affairs Committee in Warner Robins, and on GMA's Board of Directors until June of 1997. Some of his other past service includes: Directorships of the Dublin Rotary Club, the Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce, and the Dublin Country Club. He is a Licensed Broker in the State of Georgia and in the Qualifying Broker for Premier Properties of Dublin, a family owned firm. Phil's main goal is to continue the progressive attitude of the councils before him and to be a part of the continued growth of Dublin by helping to create a pro-business attitude in our small business, industry, and downtown communities. Best is also the Georgia Municipal Association First Vice President and will be installed as the organization's President at the June 2019 Annual Meeting.



Mr. Akinori Yokosawa is Manager of the Joint Venture Asia Market for Delta Air Lines, overseeing Sales and Distribution strategy of Delta and JV Partner Korean Air. He is responsible for developing and achieving Delta's key strategic sales objectives for 16 Asian countries including Japan and Korea. Akinori and his team represent Delta for various Asian community organizations across the United States. A 28-year Delta veteran, Akinori began his carrier in Customer Service department at Narita Airport in Japan. He has extensive work background in Customer Service, Airport Operations, Sales and Distribution and experience of working in Tokyo, New York, Los Angeles and Atlanta. Akinori holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Temple University.



Mr. Trevor Williams is Managing Editor of GlobalAtlanta and has spent more than a decade writing on international business and trade for Global Atlanta, an online news service covering Atlanta's intersection with the global economy. He has undertaken journalism trips to 30+ countries on five continents, uncovering stories that reveal both the perils and promise of globalization and its ramifications for his home state. Trevor focuses intently on Asia and also has written extensively on foreign direct investment, trade and exports, Georgia's ties with China, and Atlanta's emergence as a payments hub, among other topics. Trevor graduated from the University of Georgia with dual bachelor's degrees in Magazine Journalism and Religion, as well as a minor in Chinese Language and Literature. He is a proud husband and father of two young sons, as well as the editor of the book "Making Men: Five Steps to Growing Up."



Ms. Jessica Kennett Cork is Vice President of Community Engagement and Communications at YKK Corporation of America. Her primary responsibilities include managing government relations, public relations, and corporate communications for YKK Corporation's North and Central America Group; serving as the regional liaison with YKK corporate headquarters in Japan for global public relations and communications; planning corporate events; managing the region's corporate philanthropy and community outreach programs; and leading the Group's Philosophy and Core Values initiative. Cork is fluent in Japanese and has more than two decades of experience working in Japanese organizations. She has B.A. in Japanese Language and Literature from the University of Massachusetts, and an M.A. in Advanced Japanese Studies from the University of Sheffield in the U.K. Prior to joining YKK, she worked as the Adviser for Educational and Cultural Affairs at the Consulate General of Japan in Atlanta and spent 3 years as a Coordinator for International Relations in Hiroshima, Japan. Cork currently serves as Vice Chair of The Japan-America Society of Georgia and Secretary of the Governing Board of the International Charter Academy of Georgia, and is a member of the Communication Committee of The Georgia Council on Economic Education. She has four children, all of whom have attended Japanese-English bilingual immersion schools in the Atlanta area and has traveled to 25 countries around the world.