NEWS RELEASE

Consulate-General of Japan in Houston

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Japanese Imperial Decoration for Lloyd T. Hardin, Jr., Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Oklahoma City

On April 29, 2021, the Government of Japan announced the recipients of the Spring 2021 Japanese Imperial Decorations, which included Mr. Lloyd T. Hardin, Jr., Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Oklahoma City. In recognition of his contributions toward promoting exchange and friendship between Japan and the United States, Mr. Hardin is to receive the **Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon.**

Since his appointment as Honorary Consul-General in 2006, Mr. Hardin has been working to promote mutual understanding and strengthen friendly relations between Japan and Oklahoma. He has been active in promoting people-to-people exchanges through his involvement in the Kyoto-Oklahoma sister state relationship, wherein he greatly contributed to the success of the Kyoto delegation to Oklahoma in 2015 to celebrate the relationship's 30th anniversary. He has also assisted in sister city arrangements between Japan and Oklahoma, including those for Tulsa-Utsunomiya, Stillwater-Kameoka, Norman-Seika, and Shawnee-Nikaho. During that time, he aided the reestablishment of the Japan-America Society of Oklahoma and the establishment of the Consular Corps of Oklahoma.

Additionally, Mr. Hardin executed primary escort responsibilities for Oklahoma's Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State and a State Senator (former Hanshin Tigers baseball star Randy Bass) to Japan, where they were recognized and participated in the national Culture Day event in Kyoto hosted by Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan, celebrating the 1,000-year anniversary of Lady Murasaki's literary classic *The Tale of Genji*. During the trip, the delegation also represented Oklahoma in celebrations of the Kyoto-Oklahoma sister state

relationship with the Governor of Kyoto and other senior prefectural officials, and made courtesy calls on the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and both Houses of the National Diet in Tokyo. Similar duties undertaken during his years of service have included the escort of senior Oklahoma officials to attend annual celebrations of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan's Birthday in Houston hosted by the Consul-General there, where said officials presented numerous State and City Proclamations.

Mr. Hardin has contributed to building strong economic ties between Japan and Oklahoma by providing valuable support to Japanese companies that are active in, or interested in investing in the state. He has facilitated many significant meetings and collaborations between leaders from Japan and Oklahoma in business, government, and higher education. This work includes ongoing collaborative service on the Oklahoma Governor's International Team, on the Oklahoma Business Roundtable, and in conjunction with the Japan External Trade Organization.

Mr. Hardin has also greatly helped the Consulate-General of Japan in Houston with its activities in Oklahoma, including assisting Japanese nationals who reside there. In that regard, he has shown steadfast commitment to helping Japanese people in the state, including students, during both times of celebration and times of trouble. He has also served as a conduit of support between friends of Japan in Oklahoma and friends of Oklahoma in Japan, during catastrophic events that have respectively afflicted both regions with unthinkable loss and sorrow.

Mr. Hardin's 15-year service as the Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Oklahoma City will be concluding on June 24, 2021.

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