



June 20, 2009

Dear Members of the Nippon Minnesota Association,

I am writing to wish you all the best as you gather today and to thank you for your interest in fostering ties between Minnesota and Japan.

As the person here at the Trade Office responsible for helping Minnesota companies do business in Japan, I really appreciate the connections our state has there.

When I lived in Tokyo many years ago, I was amazed by the number of Minnesotans in Japan and Japanese with Minnesota connections. I think it is because there are common cultural characteristics that bring us together: an appreciation for nature, a strong belief in the importance of education, innovation in business coupled with a long-term outlook, and a desire to preserve harmony--what we call "Minnesota Nice". These shared values seem to make it easier for us to connect and build relationships—the cornerstones of business and international trade.

I hope you enjoy your day and please stay in touch with us back here in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kocs

International Trade Representative

State of Minnesota Trade Office

(ミネソタ州政府貿易局、輸出促進担当 ジェニファー・カース)