



Brooke Blackwell, Press Secretary

(O) 313.224.5925 (C) 313.580.2101

News Release

Executive Ficano blogs from Asia

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano is writing a blog this week about his experiences during a trade mission to Japan, China and South Korea. It is Ficano's seventh trade mission to Asia. This is his first installment.

After a two hour delay, we finally got off the ground. Luckily we were safe on the ground and comfortable inside. Smooth flight, landed just in time to do radio interview with WJR as I literally was walking off the plane.

- Monday 9/26: Hon. Kuninori Matsuda, Consul General of Japan in Detroit speaking at opening ceremonies says there "is no greater friend to Japan than the U.S." This sentiment is expressed by so many of the speakers and the companies we met. Everyone has acknowledged we have a great working relationship, but they are most grateful we have stuck by them during their times of tragedy during the past year when the earthquake and tsunami devastated their country.

- There are 2,000 Japanese companies in the U.S. with approximately 183,000 employees. We met with companies like Aisin who have existing facilities in Wayne County in an effort to maintain and grow healthy relationships. Aisin is so much more than an auto supplier. Aisin has made sewing machines for over 60 years, and also is advancing into solar technology. It also makes handicapped accessible beds and chairs. Aisin has 30 facilities in North America, four in Michigan (Plymouth, Fowlerville and two in Ann Arbor). It has 2,000 U.S. employees, 550 in Michigan. Aisin is a Tier 1 auto supplier with \$25 billion in global sales.

- Monday 9/26: At the gala chatted with Governor Snyder and Ryuji Ohno from All Nippon about the benefits of Detroit Metro expanding its cargo operations.

- Tuesday 9/27: Met with existing Wayne County auto supplier company Yazaki. which has 1,500 employees in Metro Detroit. Canton is looking to hire 120 more employees within the next year. We offered to assist them in any way we can. Yazaki has facilities in 32 countries with \$15.2 billion in total annual sales. They asked for our advice as they seek continued success. They were thankful to Wayne County. We re-affirmed our interest and offered to support them in any endeavor. In addition to their automotive business, Yazaki has branched into energy storage for wind, solar and utility grids.

- In addition to the meetings with our existing companies, we also established some ties with key companies looking to expand. We hope that our tax incentives, great workforce and of course our automakers will help attract more investment dollars to Wayne County.

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Follow Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano's trade mission on twitter and www.waynecounty.com.