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Press Release

The Toshizo Watanabe Foundation Donates \$10 Million to the IUC Endowment establishes new fellowship program

Stanford, CA, December 18, 2017: The Inter-University Center (IUC) for Japanese Language Studies at Stanford University announced the receipt of a \$10 million endowment gift from the Toshizo Watanabe Foundation. The donation represents the largest in the 54-year history of the IUC, and establishes the Toshizo Watanabe Fellows Program, providing student scholarships for the world-renowned language institute.

As a Kamakura native and firm believer in the importance of language in international relationships, Toshizo “Tom” Watanabe studied at the Keio University in Tokyo, and graduated from Brandeis University under the Wien International Scholarship Program with a degree in political science. He went on to become the CEO of Nikken, and pioneered its marketing of products and technology in North and South America for the international health and wellness firm.

Regarding his gift, Watanabe states, “My decision to make the donation was based on the dedication and passion of the IUC students and teachers that I have observed in the past seven years. I strongly wish that my endowment will increase the number of American students who are eager to study in Japan.”

“Tom Watanabe’s endowment gift is truly transformational, not only because of what it does for students but also because it acknowledges the value of advanced Japanese language training in such a significant way,” explains IUC Executive Director Indra Levy. “Japanese is one of the most difficult languages in the world. It is really exciting to think about how many students will be able to fully devote themselves to advanced training at the IUC as Toshizo Watanabe Fellows, and the contributions to the world they will make in the future. All of us at the IUC are deeply grateful to Mr. Watanabe for his generous support of our students and program.”

The IUC program is located in Yokohama, Japan, and educates students from around the globe from universities and colleges across the United States and Canada. Its purpose is to provide the most rigorous training in advanced Japanese language to students who are dedicated to establishing a lifelong professional relationship with Japan. For more information on programs, please contact Kevin Singleton at ksinglet@stanford.edu, or visit the website at www.iucjapan.org.

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