



Director Candidate for 2023-2024 Board

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Dear FCCJ Member,

It is that time of the year again for everyone to reflect on our Club and its future. I had the privilege to serve you as the Second Vice President in the past two years and I thank you wholeheartedly for your trust in me.

Traditionally, the 2nd Vice President's position involves managing staff and other relevant HR business. My previous terms coincided with the most challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic but thanks to the great team effort by our HR Committee, we were able to resolve first and foremost the all-important and very costly union negotiations which had been dragging on for three years. Additionally, we managed to apply for three of our employees what's called the Employee Career-Up subsidy from the government worth over 2.5 million yen. After a long hiatus, we also now have two wonderful interns, one from Hawai'i and another from Ukraine, who are already making contributions to our Club.

The next term starting from July will be a tough one for a couple for reasons: There are substantial pension payouts to several retiring employees, which we are required to pay by law despite further denting our already precarious budget. The HR Committee has also just completed a satisfaction survey among members and we hope to announce the results next month. One respondent asked, "I want to meet people!!! Where are they?" Another noted that FCCJ "... needs a Marketing Manager with a thick skin who can take advantage of the Club's location" to attract new business and young members. I fully agree. Although we are unable to afford such a manager at the moment, I promise to make sure the new Board considers this proposition seriously.

Under these circumstances, I believe we need to make the most of our current staff, who has an average age of 55 and years of service of 25, by giving them specific job responsibilities, a proper career plan, and the necessary training to upgrade their skills during their remaining time at FCCJ until their retirement. Under my chairmanship and with the help of our HR expert, the HR Committee has drawn up a draft of a 3-year HR plan to address these issues; I trust the new Board will take notice and continue its efforts in that direction.

HR is not the only place you can find me at the Club: As the co-chair of our Freedom of the Press Committee, my other job is to help coordinate the entire process of Freedom of the Press Awards 2023, which we hope to announce next month. I also hope to continue to serve on the Professional Activities Committee, where I often write notices for and moderate press events.

Irrespective of whether I succeed in being elected to the Board this year, you have my word that I will continue my volunteer work on the above issues. Thank you.