

# Biden Suffers EU Elections Blow

# INTERNATIONAL Newsweek®

# Tipping Point

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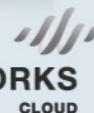
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by KATHERINE FUNG

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**COVER** Illustration for Newsweek by Alex Fine



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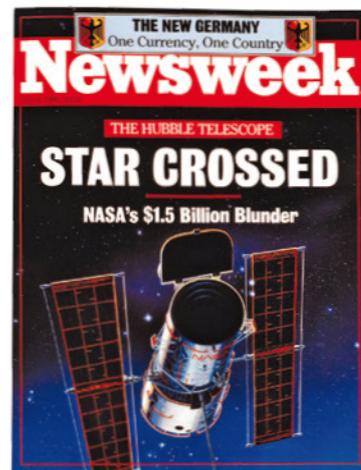
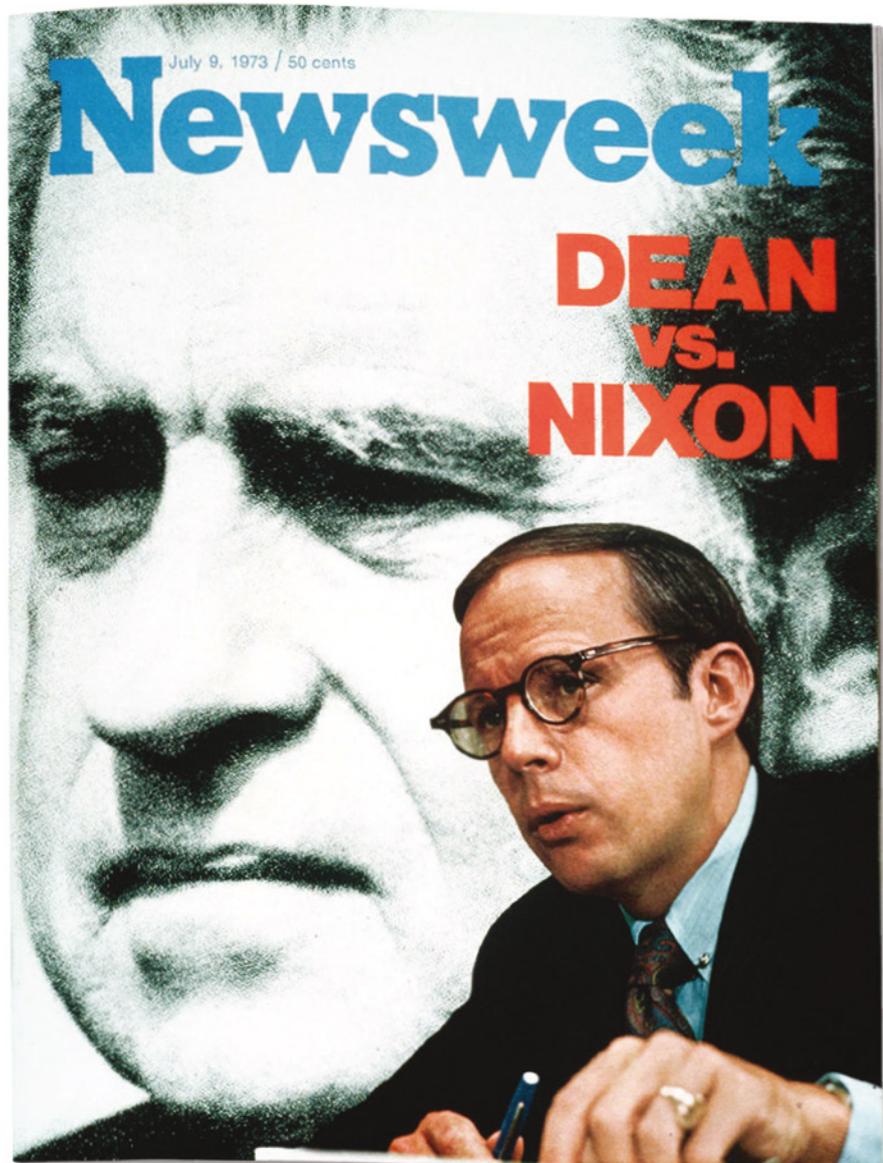
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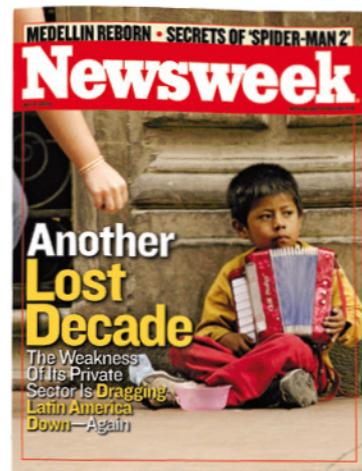
1973

“[John Dean’s] words introduced a spectacle unprecedented in history—an insider’s sworn testimony that a sitting president had been a known conspirator in a crime,” *Newsweek* wrote. A year later, Nixon became the first and only president to resign after evidence revealed his team’s attempts to undermine the Democratic party and aid his bid for reelection. Now, after Donald Trump has been found guilty of falsifying business records to conceal a hush money payment and benefit his 2016 campaign, the result is much different—Trump seeks another term with widespread support.



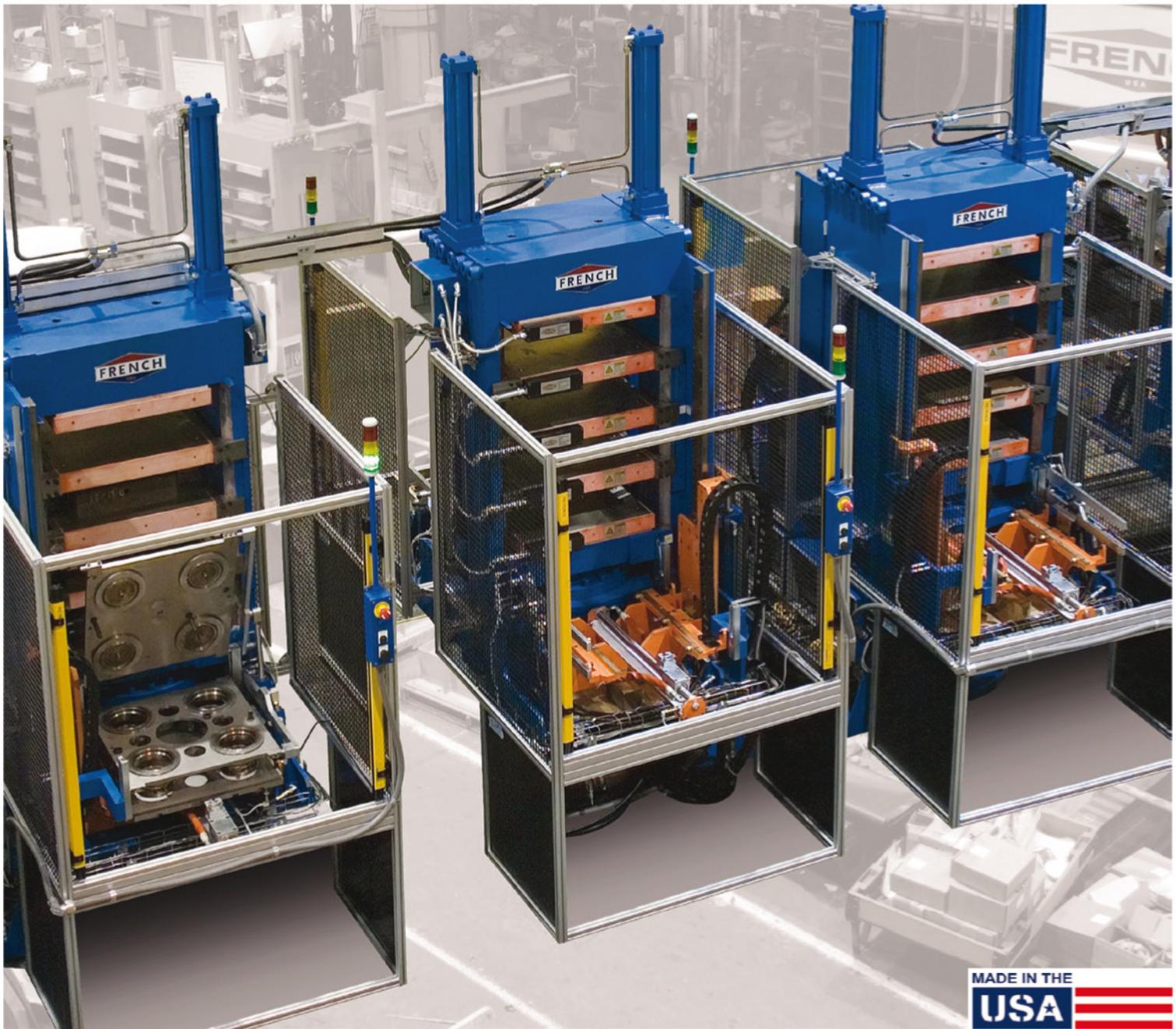
1990

“[The Hubble] was seeing the cosmos as if through a cataract,” *Newsweek* said after a mismeasurement on a mirror jeopardized the \$1.5 billion project. The telescope was fixed in 1993 and has taken sharp images of faraway galaxies since, celebrating 30 years in orbit in 2020.



2004

“Mounting anger has so far only foiled [Vicente] Fox’s plans for economic reform,” *Newsweek* wrote of Mexico’s then-president following a series of anti-capitalist-democracy attacks. Twenty years later, economic sentiment has improved as president-elect Claudia Sheinbaum’s platform of welfare reform and anti-violence earned her 60 percent of the vote. 🇲🇽



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NAIROBI, KENYA

## Budget Battle

Protesters demonstrate in Kenya's capital city as the country's members of parliament debate a finance bill on June 18. The proposed bill would introduce \$2.7 billion in new taxes on bread, transportation and other necessities amid a cost-of-living crisis in the East African nation. The government has since announced that it would back down on some of the more controversial taxes. Over 200 people, many Gen Z, were injured in the protests after police began using tear gas and water cannons to break up the crowd. One man was killed, allegedly by police gunfire.

📷 • LUIS TATO/AFP

KENYA LAW  
INSTITUTION OF KENYA, 2018  
www.kenyalaw.org

GETTY







INDIANAPOLIS

## Olympic Dreams

Phoebe Bacon, 21, competes at the Olympic trials in the women's 200-meter backstroke on June 20. Bacon placed second in the semifinal and final qualifiers, behind fellow competitor Regan Smith, to ensure her return to the Olympic team. The University of Wisconsin student placed fifth at the Tokyo Games in 2021 and won this year's NCAA Championship for the event.

▶ DARRON CUMMINGS



WASHINGTON, D.C.

## March for Freedom

Civil War reenactors brave the summer heat as they march in front of the Lincoln Memorial on June 19 for the Juneteenth People's Parade. It was one of many events held around the city commemorating the day that the last Black slaves in Galveston, Texas, learned the news of their freedom in 1865. Juneteenth was declared a national holiday in 2021, following a campaign by teacher and activist Opal Lee.

▶ DREW ANGERER/AFP



PYONGYANG, NORTH KOREA

## Diplomacy Drive

Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un arrive at a welcome ceremony in Kim Il Sung Square to mark the start of the Russian president's diplomatic visit to North Korea on June 19. The leaders met to further defense ties between the two nuclear nations, ultimately signing an agreement of mutual aid if either face "aggression," which could have global implications as Russia continues its war with Ukraine.

▶ GAVRIIL GRIGOROV/POOL/AFP



## **SHOCK WAVES**

The surge in support for Russia-sympathetic parties in June's European Parliament elections could be a problem for Joe Biden's pro-Ukraine transatlantic strategy.

# Biden's European Headache

The right-wing surge in the EU elections could hamper the president's ambitions in Ukraine and play into the hands of his election rival, Donald Trump

**█** EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS ACROSS the European Union sent shock waves through the bloc's centrist establishment in June, with the French and German engines of Europe's U.S.-aligned foreign policy—particularly President Joe Biden's backing for Ukraine—facing serious domestic turbulence.

As of June 21, Europe's center-right European People's Party was predicted to return 189 lawmakers to the next Parliament, winning over 26 percent of 720 seats contested. The right-wing European Conservatives and Reformists were set to take some 83 seats.

The center-left Socialists and Democrats' seat share is projected to remain roughly around the same at 136, while the liberal Renew Europe bloc is predicted to win around 74 seats—marking a significant loss of over 20 representatives.

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola, an EPP member, declared that “the constructive, pro-European center has held.” But the 185 million votes cast across 27 nations also delivered—though less so than predicted—a surge in far-right

support, with Euroskeptic, anti-immigration and Moscow-sympathetic parties winning big in both France and Germany. The two nations are traditionally considered the economic and political pillars of the EU. A far-right swing for either could derail the transatlantic pro-Ukraine strategy led by Biden's administration.

Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Jim O'Brien tweeted that the U.S. looks

“forward to working with those elected, as with all EU institutions and member states, to advance security and prosperity and to deliver democracy's benefits to all citizens.”

But turbulence in Europe will concern Washington, D.C., as will the rise of far-right parties increasingly linked with similarly minded American ideologues supportive of Donald Trump—Biden's rival in November. Leslie Vinjamuri, director of the U.S. and Americas program at London's Chatham House think tank, said the question will be: “Can Europe pull it together and think strategically about the moment that we live in?”

“In Germany, in France, in Austria, in a select number of very important countries, there is a

by

**DAVID  
BRENNAN**

dissensus about some things that are really important to the Biden administration: climate, security and defense,” Vinjamuri told *Newsweek*.

“It’s less each individual policy than a general sense that all is not well, if you think about ‘well’ being unity around a liberal internationalist agenda that puts transatlantic prosperity and security and cooperation at the front.”

There is also concern, Vinjamuri said, that the success of far-right European parties “inspires forces within the U.S. that the current administration does not wish to see inspired.”

“If you start thinking about the MAGA Republicans, the Trump campaign and Trump himself, it’s good. This is a good news story,” she said.

The 10-year bilateral security deal inked by Biden and Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky at the G7 summit in Italy in June was a statement of intent, Biden declaring: “We’re not backing down,” and vowing that Russian President Vladimir Putin “cannot wait us out.” A White House memo also called the deal “a key part of Ukraine’s bridge to NATO membership.”

Kyiv is weaving together security agreements with top NATO nations as a stopgap to membership, with all key players acknowledging that Ukraine will likely not be able to join amid its war with Russia. Germany and France are among the 17 nations to have signed bilateral pacts with Kyiv. But there is no guarantee that such foundations will be respected by future NATO administrations or parliaments.

### Macron’s Gamble

Marine Le Pen’s National Rally (RN) took nearly one-third of all votes cast in France, prompting President Emmanuel Macron to dissolve the domestic parliament and call for a snap election that could see RN win the right to appoint a prime minister.

Le Pen and party President Jordan Bardella have sought to downplay the RN’s links to Moscow, which include a past \$6.4 million bank loan and its alleged role as a “communication channel” for the Kremlin, in the words of a 2023 French cross-parliamentary inquiry.

Macron has recently been at the forefront of proposals to deepen NATO involvement in Ukraine, even deploying allied troops in noncombat roles. “Recently, Macron has become a political locomotive of pro-Ukrainian initiatives, and it would be a pity if his influence dwindles,” Oleksandr Merezko—a member of the Ukrainian parliament and chair of the body’s foreign affairs committee—told *Newsweek*. “As for Le Pen’s party, it seems to have changed somewhat its pro-Putin rhetoric and became more careful.”

Just after RN’s European success, the party was polling at 32 percent; Macron’s Renaissance party at 19 percent. “It’s very risky,” Nicolas Tenzer, a non-resident senior fellow at the Center for European Policy Analysis and the author of *Notre Guerre* (Our War), told *Newsweek*. “Everything could be destroyed,” Tenzer said of Paris’

growing support for Ukraine. Disagreements between France and the U.S. remain, he added, “but they’re working well together. And in Europe right now, France is certainly the leading power.”

RN’s possible rise to power may even undermine French cooperation with top NATO allies, Tenzer suggested. “I suspect, without knowing them, that the other intelligence services wouldn’t be very willing to share very sensitive intelligence information,” he said.

And a future Prime Minister Bardella supported by a majority of lawmakers could block funding for common EU defense budgets, including those helping to arm Kyiv.

RN and Le Pen are not due another shot at presidency until 2027. *Newsweek* has emailed the RN for comment.

### Alternative Germany

In Germany, Chancellor Olaf Scholz and his Social Democratic Party were also humbled by the right. Alternative for Germany—ejected from the far-right European Parliament’s Identity and Democracy bloc after its lead candidate said Nazi SS members were “not all criminals”—was projected to win around 16 percent of the vote.

The AfD has been beset by Russia-linked scandals, including allegations that top party officials have been involved in Moscow’s espionage operations. The AfD was criticized this year when lawmakers traveled to Russia to serve as election observers for Putin’s presidential coronation. Days after their European success, all but four of AfD’s 77 representatives boycotted a speech by Zelensky in Berlin—as did members of left-wing populist Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht party. *Newsweek* has emailed the AfD for comment.

Yet Scholz’s primary challengers still come from the traditional center-right. The CDU/CSU Union won 30 percent of the vote to SPD’s 14 percent,

**GROWING SUPPORT** Marine Le Pen’s National Rally and its President Jordan Bardella recently topped French President Emmanuel Macron’s party in polls.





**ALLIANCE** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has had the support of U.S. President Joe Biden, but a far-right swing in Europe could derail that.

parliament may seek to delay or torpedo new members, especially those aligned with Moscow's outlook.

Still, Kyiv is optimistic, Merezhko said. "Extreme right and extreme left parties, which are against support of Ukraine, will not play a key role in the European Parliament," he said.

In July, Biden will lead NATO's 75th anniversary celebrations at a summit in Washington, D.C. It will be fraught with tensions over Ukraine's NATO bid and concerns that Europeans are still not doing enough. "The number-one agenda item for U.S. leadership at the summit is going to be to tell the story to Americans of Europe's very significant contributions through NATO, especially making contributions to security in defense in Europe, and also obviously in supporting the defense of Ukraine," Vinjamuri said.

But the relatively slow pace of European aid to Ukraine and the failure of many nations to hit NATO's 2 percent spending target all run counter to Biden's narrative—and arguably bolster Trump's "America First" brand of foreign policy transactionalism.

"A lot of people in Washington have always felt like Europe needs to...really invest more strategically and consistently and collectively in security and defense," Vinjamuri said. "The fact that the AfD did as well as it did is not a good thing" for the White House, she added. "The fact that the far right did as well as they did in France is not a good thing. These are two pretty major players when it comes to Europe." 

► **David Brennan** is NEWSWEEK's diplomatic correspondent. Follow him on X @DavidBrennan100

reflecting its strong position ahead of the October 2025 national election. It has been largely supportive of Kyiv, and for Ukrainians may prove preferable to the confusion of Scholz's unpopular "traffic light" coalition government.

"The relative success of the AfD is of some concern, because this party is ostensibly pro-Putin and tends to be regarded as a neo-Nazi party," Merezhko said. "In the EU, our biggest supporter in terms of military aid is Germany, and the victory of the CDU/CSU is encouraging."

### 'Chaos' in Europe?

The immediate impact of June's votes will be limited. The European Parliament shares co-legislative power with the European Council—composed of the heads of state of national governments—in choosing to adopt and amend proposed legislation. Both decide on the EU budget and approve the head of the European Commission, which alone draws up legislation.

The ultimate decision-making body for foreign policy is the Council. Nonetheless, the shifting balance of power in parliament poses "a risk of growing divisions and even chaos," Pawel Zerka,

a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, told *Newsweek*. This "threatens European unity and capacity to achieve compromises, so much in need today given the Ukraine war and the potential for another Trump presidency."

The vote will redraw the battlefield for European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, a conservative EPP member. She will need the support of 361 parliamentarians for a second term, which may mean appealing to far-right Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Parliament will also have influence over EU enlargement. Ukraine is waiting with Moldova, Georgia and other nations where Russia has significant influence. A more powerful far-right bloc within the

**"In Germany, in France... there is a **dissensus** about some things that are important to the Biden administration: security and defense."**



U.S. ELECTIONS

# 'I'm Happy To Disrupt'

Libertarian presidential candidate Chase Oliver talks to *Newsweek* about Trump, Biden, NATO, Gaza and maximum freedom

**▶** LIBERTARIAN PRESIDENTIAL candidate Chase Oliver may be a long shot, but he sees himself as having one key advantage over former President Donald Trump and incumbent President Joe Biden—his age.

The 38-year-old Georgia native is less than half the age of both dominant candidates, as Trump is 78 and Biden is 81. Even when broadening the field to include fellow third-party contenders Robert

F. Kennedy Jr. (70), Jill Stein (74) and Cornel West (71), Oliver is still decades younger—a fact he's hoping can boost his campaign with millennial and Generation Z voters.

"It's time for our generation to really rise up," he told *Newsweek* in an exclusive interview.

Oliver believes that Americans should have the maximum freedom over their own lives without government interference. In his view, drugs should be

by

**JASON LEMON**

**“I think the first thing we need to do is look to fully decriminalize all drugs.”**

decriminalized, people should have “bodily autonomy” to make their own health care decisions in consultation with their doctors and the constitutional right to have guns should “not be infringed.”

The Libertarian candidate also wants the U.S. to withdraw from NATO and bring home American troops stationed overseas, while doing away with military aid to foreign nations. That includes Israel, which Oliver says is currently committing a “genocide” in Gaza. He also hopes to phase out Medicare and Social Security, saying these programs are not sustainable given the national debt currently stands near \$35 trillion.

Speaking to *Newsweek*, the Libertarian candidate explained his views on a range of issues, from Donald Trump’s legal troubles to foreign wars and why he believes the country needs a new, younger generation to take power.

The interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

**Newsweek** \_ A lot of Americans still aren’t very aware of who you are. Can you briefly explain who you are and what your campaign is about?

**DRUG STANCE** A rally against marijuana arrests in New York City in 2012. Oliver insists street violence would decrease if drugs were made legal and addiction was seen as a medical issue.

**Chase Oliver** \_ I’m 38 years old. I’ll be 39 on Election Day. That’s half Donald Trump’s age. And I live in Atlanta, Georgia. I’ve lived here for over 10 years now and grew up in Snellville, Georgia, which is a suburb of Atlanta.

I got my start being an anti-war activist. And then moved on to become a criminal justice reform advocate and somebody who has always spoken up for things like ballot access.

My professional career, I did 13 years in the restaurant industry. I started out as a dishwasher and then worked my way through the industry. Then [I] got into the logistics industry for years, where I helped move goods from one side of the world to the other. And then [I] did a little dabble in HR work.

**I understand that you previously supported President Barack**

**Obama and considered yourself a Democrat. Why did you leave the Democratic Party?**

I joined the Democratic Party, being an anti-war activist opposing the war in Iraq. George W. Bush was the president, and not knowing about any other political parties, I assumed, well, he’s the Republican, I must be a Democrat. Even though I was a Democrat who liked guns and a Democrat who hated taxes and liked the free market.

In 2008, we nominated and elected Barack Obama on a lot of anti-war promises that he quickly pulled back on, things like closing Guantanamo Bay, talking to any world leader without precondition, ending the wars. So, that pushed me out of the Democratic Party, and because I had positions like being pro-gun, pro-free market and, in general, pro-live-and-let-live, I found my way to the Libertarian Party.



FROM LEFT: FRANCIS CHUNG/POLITICO/AP IMAGES; SPENCER PLATT/GETTY

**You're running against Donald Trump and Joe Biden. What would be your number one criticisms of Trump and Biden?**

Crazily enough, it's much the same for both of them. Neither of them have stopped the expansion of the state in terms of authority, in terms of the size and scope of the state. Both of them are allowing our government to grow ever faster to control more and more parts of our lives, and to spread violence via the badge, the bullet and the bomb. Both here at home and abroad.

I see them as two wings of the same bird. Both of them are authoritarians. Both of them grow the government. It's just a matter of different styles. And both of their styles of governance lead to further partisanship in our country and further division amongst the population. So they are both terrible choices.

**Do you see either as less bad or worse than the other?**

No matter which of them gets elected, we'll have a person at the top of the ticket who's running as president who just doesn't connect generationally with millennials and Gen Z.

I think I do, considering I am a millennial. I'm probably the youngest candidate for president in a long time.

It's time for our generation to really rise up. We're one of the largest voting blocs; millennials and Gen Z certainly together represent a plurality of the votes. We want to make sure our voices are heard, and we're tired of octogenarian politicians controlling our lives. The same people who have been pulling the lever of power today were pulling [it] when I was in high school, and I think that's kind of ridiculous.

**Libertarians are generally concerned about the U.S. justice system. Do you think Donald Trump is a victim of the justice system?**

First, I want to say it's funny to see people caring about the justice system only when their preferred candidate for president is going to court, not when there's millions of people who are affected by the justice system...all the time.

**RIVALRY** Trump would be getting "more harshly treated" for his crimes if he were an unknown member of the public, according to Oliver.

Where there are problems with the justice system, I will say the people that [it] affects the least are people who have the means to defend themselves. It's not the Donald Trumps of the world who are facing the worst abuses of our justice system. It's those who can't afford fancy attorneys, who can't afford the army of staff and paralegals.

It's the people who are getting a public defender, people who are being pushed out by our unfair drug war. That's creating an entire cycle of poverty. It's people who are suffering the abuses in our prison system. I doubt Donald Trump is going to serve time in prison. He's probably going to get probation, which is one of the lower ends of what he could be getting punished with.

I think if he were a person without means, a person who was unknown and, statistically speaking, if they were a person of color, they would be getting more harshly treated by a judge in this country. And I think it's important to recognize that Donald Trump—his legal issues are not the most important justice issues in this country.

**You mentioned drug issues related to the criminal justice system.**

**What is your view on how the country should address drug crimes?**

The first thing we need to do is look to fully decriminalize all drugs. The reason why I say this is because addiction is a medical issue. It's not an issue that gets solved by throwing people into a jail cell.

The drug war itself is what creates the black market for cartels to be created, gives them the profit motive to put violence on our streets, and in a decriminalized situation that would certainly be decreased.

Very quickly, we would start





**GENERATION GAP** Oliver claims millennials like him are being controlled by aging politicians, and says President Joe Biden is “an authoritarian.”

**the government. I’m wondering, how does that impact programs like Social Security and Medicare?**

We recognize that the Social Security system is going to go bankrupt. And so what do I want for younger workers? The ability for us to get our employee contribution to Social Security given back to us. Keep the employer contribution so, that way, we can keep the system solvent long enough to let this last generation or those who are about to go on benefits to retire. For younger workers, we should be able to get our money back, put it into an IRA—or even if we just put it into the S&P 500, it’s going to perform better than what Social Security is providing to us.

Then Medicare and Medicaid—we need to phase these systems out too, because government-sponsored health care stifles innovation. There are better ways to provide lower cost, high-quality health care.

**Both Democrats and Republicans regularly attack each other for restricting free speech in different ways. How do you view the concerns raised by the two parties?**

I view it just as part of the two-party pro-wrestling match that we continue to see, that’s full of hypocrisies, full of contradictions. This is the nature of Republicans versus Democrats, and it’s indicative of a system that allows a two-party system to flourish. If we had more than two choices and more than two voices in nearly every race, and we had a broad spectrum of four or five or six parties that really represented the broad American electorate, you would see

seeing legal avenues for people to get the substances they want to put in their body as adults.

**As you said earlier, you’re pro-gun. Do you see the government as having any role in regulating or controlling the guns that circulate within the country?**

It should be the right of any adult to be able to purchase a firearm. I don’t believe in restrictions. The only people who should be punished for having a gun are people who use it in an offensive manner to harm other people. And there should be stiff penalties for that kind of violence.

**Should people have to undergo background checks before they purchase guns? Or should former convicts be able to purchase guns?**

I think a basic criminal background check to make sure that you’re not currently under a restriction that doesn’t allow for that. But I do believe that if you have been arrested for a crime, once you serve the time, you should be able to get your gun rights back. Same as you should be able to

get your voting rights back. And that includes for felonies. I tell people right now, I think it’s wrong that Donald Trump, who’s been convicted on 34 felonies, has to give up his firearm until sentencing. I think that’s wrong, particularly with nonviolent felonies.

I’m tired of seeing, particularly in communities of color and communities who don’t have the means, lower socioeconomic folks, who are often stuck on these felony charges. They lose the right to vote for years, and I think that’s wrong.

**I know Libertarians generally want to drastically reduce the size of**

**“We’re tired of octogenarian politicians controlling our lives. The same people who have been pulling the lever of power today were pulling [it] when I was in high school.”**

FROM LEFT: JIM WATSON/AFP/GETTY; MANDEL NGAN/AFP/GETTY

less of this kind of stuff happening. The truth is, is both of them are anti-free speech. Both of them are anti-free expression in their own ways.

**I believe you've described the situation in Gaza as a genocide. Many people vehemently disagree with that term being used in this context. Can you talk about your views on that issue, and why you use that term?**

I think if you look at the International Criminal Court and other international organizations that have identified this as a genocide, they lay out pretty clearly the reason why that term is used. It's not a term that's used willy-nilly.

If we are truly an ally to Israel and its people, we need to call out when its government does wrong. And I think there are millions and millions of Americans who are waiting for a voice to say that.

**You're against foreign military aid broadly speaking, and also want to bring back U.S. troops from abroad. Can you talk a little bit about that?**

I think it has to be something that's done in a responsible way. But if I were president of the United States, I would signal that we're going to start removing our military footprint from so many places around the world.

We have many bases in Europe, for instance, that could be handed over to our allies. We've been exporting our values via the bomb and the bullet for decades and decades now. That has led to further destabilization in the world, further resentment against the United States and its people.

**CONFLICT** Protesters outside the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem on May 24. Libertarian Oliver has described the situation in Israel as a genocide.

I think it's time for us to change our foreign policy to one that's more focused on peace and diplomacy, free trade, voluntary exchange and working alongside our neighbors to create prosperity. Because if I'm selling something to you or you're buying something [from] me or vice versa, we're inclined not to

want to shoot at each other because we're trading partners. That needs to be the way we facilitate our relationships around the world, through trade and through economic ties, not through militaristic ties and being basically a military empire around the world.

**And how would that work in relation to NATO? Is that something the U.S. should abandon?**

I think we need to remove ourselves from NATO. I do believe in supporting the rights of free people. If we're ever attacked, we can defend our sovereignty. For those who are like, "Well, you'll always abandon Western Europe if you're not NATO," I remind them that we helped fight the Nazis in Western Europe. In World War II, we didn't need a NATO clause to do that.

Once the Cold War ended, we

**"It's time for us to change our foreign policy to one that's more focused on peace and diplomacy, free trade, voluntary exchange and working alongside our neighbors to create prosperity."**





**LOWER BARRIERS** Oliver says the U.S. should encourage trading with Xi Jinping's China to protect the economy and avoid military conflict.

needed to disengage NATO and start engaging Russia as a trading partner and as a partner within Europe. I think that would have diffused tensions far more than continuing the NATO state and expanding it.

**When it comes to China, there's a lot of bipartisan concern in D.C. How do you think the U.S. should be managing that relationship?**

I don't think we should engage in trade wars with China. We shouldn't be trying to one-up them on this because when we do that, we put our own economy in danger of this bubble burst cycle. I think what we need to do is insist on actually lowering the trade barriers with China, calling them on their bluff, engaging them in trade. The more we further entangle ourselves in free trade, the less likely we're to entangle ourselves in military conflict.

affirming. I believe that God's love is for all people. This is not a politician speaking. This is me as a person. You're allowed to have whatever faith you want and I respect that. But to me, the gospel of Jesus Christ is one that is about universal love and empathy for all people that extends to people regardless of who they love, and what their gender expression is.

**Another issue that has been linked to conservatives is abortion, especially after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. How would you work to address this issue as president?**

I'm pro-make-your-own-choices on just about everything. I support the Hyde Amendment that would seek to remove federal funding for abortion, because I don't think your tax money should be taken out of your pocket to fund something that is so divisive. I also believe that the private market and charity will pay for that. But I also believe in being pro-choice. I think that you should not be prevented from [having an abortion] up to the point of viability. I think this is where most Americans are, honestly.

**A lot of people describe third-party candidates in general as, at best, a spoiler for whichever candidate. What's your response to that criticism?**

My response is, if you look at the approval ratings of both presidents, regardless of party, as well as the Congress, they're at record lows and you can't spoil something that's already rotten, which is Washington, D.C., and the way things are done there.

If I'm a disrupter, I'm happy to disrupt the political process.

► **Jason Lemon** is the weekend editor at NEWSWEEK. Follow him on X @JasonLemon

**You've described yourself as proudly gay. In the past couple years, there has been a lot of cultural backlash against the LGBTQ+ community. What do you think the president's role, or the government's role, is in responding to that kind of backlash?**

I think why this backlash comes is because we've seen government trying to manufacture cultural changes more quickly than they were going to happen. I would much rather let the free market of ideas happen. I believe in a cultural ceasefire. I don't believe in fighting culture wars. That being said, I support the civil liberties and the rights of each and every individual to be equal in the laws, in the eyes of the government. Period. You should have your right to live as you see fit in peace, to raise your family as you see fit in peace.

**I believe you also identify as a Christian. A lot of the backlash has come from conservative Christians. How do you navigate that in your personal life, in your personal relationships?**

I was raised...evangelical, but now I'm a proud Episcopalian. I'm a member of a church that is LGBTQ-



FROM BELOW: EMILY GLICK/MIDDLE EAST IMAGES/APP/GETTY; TINGSHU WANG - POOL/GETTY



# DISSENTING



BUCKING THEIR TRADITIONAL **RESERVE**,  
JUDGES FROM ACROSS THE SPECTRUM  
ARE **PUBLICLY** DISAGREEING WITH THE  
SUPREME COURT **JUSTICES** AND DECISIONS

BY  
**KATHERINE  
FUNG**

PHOTO BY  
**TOM  
WILLIAMS**

# OPINIONS

POOL/AFP/GETTY

**T**HERE IS A GROWING CHORUS OF SUPREME Court critics coming from within the judiciary. Judges on both sides of the ideological spectrum and across various levels have become increasingly willing to speak out, warning America about the future of democracy.

Among those critics are retired Judge David S. Tatel. A Clinton appointee who served for nearly 30 years on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, Tatel recently revealed in a new memoir, *Vision: A Memoir of Blindness and Justice*, that part of the reason he stepped down from the court in January was because he grew tired of the Supreme Court's "low regard" for judicial principles.

He's not alone. Tatel is one of at least three judges who offered a strong rebuke of the Supreme Court recently. In a May Slate interview, Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Todd Eddins, who was appointed by former Democratic Governor David Ige, slammed the justices for being "incredibly dishonest about how law and facts are cherry-picked." The same month, U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves, an Obama appointee, also hit the court for its qualified immunity doctrine: In a ruling on a false accusation case in Mississippi, he wrote that the doctrine, established by the Supreme Court and which protects state and local officials from individual liability, was "an unconstitutional error." Both Eddins and Reeves are sitting judges.

"My views, I think, are widely shared throughout the judicial system," Tatel told *Newsweek*. "Obviously, there are people who don't agree with them, but there are, I can assure you, a large number of judges who will not find anything I've said in this book surprising."

Jennifer Ahearn, senior counsel for the Brennan Center's Judiciary Program, said it's "pretty remarkable" that some judges are choosing to speak out, given how "unusual" it is for judges to speak outside of their work.

"I suspect that, frankly, that's the tip of the iceberg," Ahearn told *Newsweek*. "If a few judges are willing to stick their head above the parapet, then probably a lot of other judges also feel the same way and just aren't in a position to do that."

Alex Badas, an assistant professor specializing in judicial politics at the University of Houston, told *Newsweek* that the criticisms reflect a growing polarization of the judiciary and a general dissatisfaction with the Supreme Court's conservative supermajority.

"Before, when the court was more balanced, there existed somewhat of an equilibrium. Conservatives



**OBJECTION**  
Tatel, seen here at a naturalization ceremony in 2017, has criticized the Supreme Court's "low regard" for judicial principles and says, "It's not about the results."

would win some major cases, and liberals would win some major cases, too. So, anger toward the Supreme Court would not build up to the point where sitting judges would feel comfortable speaking out against the court," Badas said. "That equilibrium does not exist now."

Given this polarity, some conservatives have dismissed critiques from liberal judges, like Tatel, Eddins and Reeves, arguing that their disagreement is with the outcome of the court's rulings and the bench's recent shift to the right.

But Tatel said his disapproval is "about the act of judging. It's not about the results. It was one thing to follow rulings I believed were wrong when they resulted from a judicial process I respected," he wrote in his memoir. "It was another to be bound by the decision of an Institution I barely recognized."

Judicial criticisms of the Supreme Court have

**"THE PUBLIC DOESN'T SEE THE COURT AS A LEGITIMATE COURT, BUT RATHER AS AN UNELECTED POLITICAL BODY."**



come not only from the left. Retired Judge J. Michael Luttig, a conservative who himself was a Supreme Court contender under President George W. Bush, has become one of the most outspoken critics of the court. In March, Luttig cowrote an op-ed for *The Atlantic* that blasted the Supreme Court for doing “a grave disservice to the Constitution and the nation” by imposing “an ahistorical misinterpretation” of the Fourteenth Amendment in *Trump v. Anderson*—a case challenging former President Donald Trump’s 2024 candidacy under the Constitution’s disqualification clause.

U.S. Circuit Judge Kevin Newsom, a Trump appointee, also knocked the Supreme Court in a February speech at a symposium hosted by the *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy*. Newsom took issue with how the current bench has relied on historical “tradition” to justify its landmark rulings, an approach that the federal appeals judge said risks leaving “too much to individual judges’ discretion.”

### The People Concur

THE JUDICIARY’S INCREASING DISPLEASURE WITH THE Supreme Court comes as public opinion of the court remains at an all-time low. A 2023 Gallup poll showed that only 41 percent of U.S. adults approve of how the court is handling its job, a sign that the Supreme Court has struggled to bounce back from its record low of 40 percent approval in September 2021. The court’s rating fell to that devastating low after it

declined to block a controversial Texas abortion law, a move that has been seen as a precursor to its 2022 decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Prior to September 2021, the court enjoyed positive approval, seeing 58 percent support in July 2020.

The growing disapproval is both a response to the court’s recent decisions and part of a greater trend that’s been seen over the past two decades. Even though the Supreme Court’s approval dropped 9 percent after its ruling in the controversial case of *Bush v. Gore* in December 2000, it still sat at 59 percent in January 2001. Support also bounced back less than six months later, returning to 62 percent in June of that year. And despite the court shifting right, even Republicans are losing trust in the Supreme Court. An Ipsos poll conducted in June found that just 52 percent of Republicans said they trust the justices “a great deal” or “a fair amount,” a 14-percent drop from July 2023.

That same poll found that 48 percent of Americans continue to trust federal judges and 49 percent say they trust state court judges, but some worry that could change because of the Supreme Court. Retired Connecticut Superior Court Judge Thomas Moukawsher told *Newsweek* the loss of trust in the judiciary as a whole has “trickled down from the top.”

As retired U.S. District Court Judge Paul Grimm, an Obama appointee, told *Newsweek*, “It is absolutely critical that the public has faith and confidence in the judiciary, and what that means is that

**LOW CONFIDENCE**  
Public opinion of the Supreme Court is at an all-time low; protesters outside the court during April 2024 arguments about the limits of Trump’s presidential immunity from prosecution.

FROM LEFT: NARA/JEFFREY REED; ALEX WONG/GETTY; ALLISON BAILEY/MIDDLE EAST IMAGES/AFP/GETTY





every judge—whether it’s a trial judge or appellate judge or Supreme Court justice—they have to recognize that they live in a glass house and that everything they do is subject to personal scrutiny.”

### Ethical Exceptions

“FROM THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, THIS IS INDEED a time of notable turmoil around the Supreme Court,” Barry Friedman, the author of *The Will of the People: How Public Opinion Has Influenced the Supreme Court and Shaped the Meaning of the Constitution*, told *Newsweek*. “Some of that is because of ideological disagreement, which happens cyclically. But part of it is because of an intransigence on the part of some of the justices to play by basic ethical rules that [they] feel should not apply to them.”

Despite adopting an ethics code in November, the nation’s top court has found itself at the epicenter of ethical controversies. Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas, both conservatives, have come under particular scrutiny over undisclosed luxury trips as well as the actions of their spouses, which critics say pose a conflict of interest, especially as the court hears cases related to the January 6 Capitol attack.

In May, *The New York Times* reported that Alito’s wife, Martha-Ann, flew an upside-down American flag—a symbol adopted by supporters of the “Stop the Steal” movement—three days before Joe

## “THE COURT IS OUT OF STEP WITH PUBLIC O

**VERDICT QUESTIONED**  
Colorado Secretary of State Jena Griswold (above, left) after arguments in *Trump v. Anderson*, which was decided in Trump’s favor, allowing him to remain on the Colorado ballot—a ruling Luttig (above, right) criticized as “a grave disservice to the Constitution.”

Biden’s inauguration. And text messages from 2020 published by *The Washington Post* revealed that Thomas’ wife Ginni repeatedly asked Trump’s chief of staff to challenge the results of the 2020 election and urged state legislators in battleground states to appoint alternate slates of electors.

These revelations have led Alito and Thomas to face continued calls for recusal, but both have rejected those calls to step aside. Alito told lawmakers last month that the flag was flown not by him, but by his wife, an “independently minded private citizen” who “makes her own decisions,” while Thomas responded to the reports about his luxury trips last year by stating that he was not required to report this type of “personal hospitality.”

“If you look in the federal judiciary, everybody except the Supreme Court is subject to an enforceable ethics code, and if you look at the traditions of being a judge, judges are just zealously careful, in general, about ethics,” Moukawsher, who was appointed

FROM LEFT: ROBERTO SCHMIDT/AFP/GETTY; ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY

by former Democratic Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy, said. “So, to see the top of the chain not have any enforceable code—and seeing it reflect back on them as though the whole judiciary is making ethical mistakes—is pretty painful for [judges].”

“It puts pressure on everybody that there’s some sort of ethical lapse among judges in America because it’s going on at the top,” he added. “The lack of an enforceable code is probably the greatest insult to the rest of the judges.”

Tatel said the ethics controversies are part of the reason he believes there’s been a drop in approval for the Supreme Court, but he added: “Loss of trust is complicated.”

### Politicization of the Court

THE RETIRED JUDGE SAID THAT WHEN TRYING TO understand why the Supreme Court is finding itself in the middle of far more difficult and politically sensitive issues—a position that is poised to make

### COMPLAINT AT HOME

Alito has been criticized recently for flying an upside-down American flag outside his home. Below, abortion rights protesters in June 2022 outside Alito’s house following the *Dobbs* decision.

the court less popular—there are reasons both in and out of the court’s control.

For one, the circumstances that the court is in is the result of a “largely dysfunctional” Congress, Tatel said. Because lawmakers fail to solve many of the issues that it should, those matters end up before the court. But, Tatel noted that the Supreme Court also has the power to choose which cases it hears.

“And so, to a certain extent, the court is itself at fault here by wading in, as often as it does, to issues that maybe would be better left to Congress or just more public debate,” he said.

Tatel said that this, combined with the fact that courts have become more contentious, contributes to the decline in public support. “It’s inevitable that the public is going to be dissatisfied with the work of the court as it seems to be more of a political institution,” Tatel said. “The public doesn’t see the court as a legitimate court, but rather as an unelected political body. It’s inevitable that the popularity will drop.”

## OPINION IN A VARIETY OF WAYS—**ESPECIALLY** ABORTION [AND] GUN RIGHTS.”



A Redfield & Wilton poll conducted exclusively for *Newsweek* found that 4-in-10 voters say the Supreme Court will be “extremely important” in determining how they vote in the 2024 election. Another 3-in-10 said it was “moderately important” and about 2-in-10 said it was “somewhat important.” Only 5 percent of voters say the court does not matter at all to their vote.

This year’s presidential candidates already know the Supreme Court will be top of mind when voters head to the polls in November.

Biden delivered a stark warning in early June about what the election means for the court, saying that he expects the 2024 winner will likely have the chance to fill two vacancies on the Supreme Court—a decision the president said would be “one of the scariest parts” of a second Trump term.

“He’s going to appoint two more [justices] flying flags upside down,” Biden said at the Los Angeles fundraiser.

#### TRIGGERED

Texas has some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the country, which came into effect after the *Dobbs* decision. Below: The Texas Supreme Court hears arguments in a 2023 case from women denied abortions despite life-threatening complications.

### A Quiet Rebellion?

MOUKAWSHER, WHO RETIRED LAST YEAR, SAID HE wouldn’t be talking if he still sat on the bench because “it would violate everything I just talked about. But I’m certain there’s concern that the conduct of [Supreme Court justices] in various circumstances has been embarrassing to lower court judges.”

“I would hope that when you hear comments from colleagues—particularly distinguished and respected colleagues—that that would, to any judge, cause them to open their eyes,” Grimm added.

Pointing out that the Supreme Court is not only the Supreme Court, but the head of the federal judiciary, Ahearn acknowledged that “it’s certainly a risk” for judges to be speaking out about the high court.

“Hopefully that’s something the Supreme Court justices are taking into account as they think about how they are responding to these kinds of situations,” she said.



FROM LEFT: SUZANNE CORDEIRO/AFP/GETTY; ROGELIO V. SOLIS/AP; ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY

Badas said it's especially crucial that the Supreme Court listens to the criticisms leveled against it by lower court judges because those are the individuals responsible for implementing Supreme Court decisions.

"If lower court judges think the Supreme Court is producing incorrect decisions, the lower courts may be more likely to try to ignore the Supreme Court's decisions or apply them in a very narrow manner," he said, adding that while the high court would still get the final say since it could overturn these hypothetical lower court decisions, it would be impossible for the court to reverse every decision.

Badas also said reversals may not deter judges, pointing to former Judge Stephen Reinhardt. In 2011, while sitting on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Reinhardt told the *Los Angeles Times*, "If anything, it's a compliment."

Tatel, however, disputed Badas' hypothesis, saying that every one of the judges he knows does their very best to apply Supreme Court decisions.

"We [are] bound by Supreme Court decisions, even the ones we [don't] agree with," Tatel said. "I don't know any judges who say, 'I'm not going to follow it because I don't agree with it.'"

Although the justices haven't responded directly to the criticisms from their peers, it appears the Supreme Court is already beginning to pay attention to the shift in public opinion. Dan Urman, a law professor who specializes in the Supreme Court at Northeastern University, told *Newsweek* that it was important for the justices to do so because the court "needs public support for its legitimacy."

"The court is out of step with public opinion in a variety of ways—especially abortion [and] gun rights—and this term, we might see the justices tack back to the middle on these issues, [like] mifepristone and keeping dangerous people from possessing weapons," Urman said.



**COURTING DISFAVOR**  
Reeves called a Supreme Court decision last month "an unconstitutional error"; and abortion rights protesters in June 2022, immediately following the *Dobbs* decision.

A day after Urman spoke to *Newsweek*, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld access to the abortion pill, delivering a win to abortion advocates just two years after it rolled back the constitutional right to abortion in *Dobbs v. Jackson*. A week later it upheld a federal gun ban for people who are subject to a domestic-violence restraining order.

"Many appeals court judges who have their work reviewed by [the Supreme] Court will say the same thing," Tatel said. "It's not all their decisions. There have been a few recent decisions that are quite good. It's not every case, it's just a lot of the major ones."

"The court is capable of writing [and] producing nonpolitical, well-reasoned opinions," he said, citing the Supreme Court's rulings in the National Rifle Association and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau cases in May. "It's just that, all too frequently, it doesn't do that." ■

**"EVERYBODY EXCEPT  
THE SUPREME COURT  
IS SUBJECT TO AN  
ENFORCEABLE ETHICS CODE."**



FROM LEFT: ZAMRZNUJTONOWI/GETTY; MERC67/GETTY



MOST

**TRUSTED**

*by* PHARMACISTS

**OTC BRANDS**

*in* AMERICA

2024

# H

EADACHES, UPSET STOMACHS AND FEVERS—THESE ARE some of the minor conditions that many people treat with over-the-counter medication. Not severe enough to require a doctor's office visit, these discomforts can often be handled by talking to a pharmacist and getting a recommendation for a product that doesn't even need a prescription. It's a commonplace occurrence: Research reported by the Consumer Healthcare Products Association shows that 81 percent of adults use OTC medications as their initial response to small ailments. Americans average 26 trips per year to buy OTC products, but they visit the doctor only three times in the same time span. With so many occasions to select an OTC product, there is ample opportunity to make the wrong choice. To help consumers make the most informed decisions about which OTC medications they should use, *Newsweek* and leading market research firm BrandSpark International have partnered for the third annual list of the Most Trusted by Pharmacists Awards honoring OTC brands in America. This recognition will make it easier for customers to make confident purchases, as the products listed here come with a pharmacist-voted endorsement. This year's winners were determined based on a survey of more than 400 pharmacists in the U.S. who were asked their opinion on which brands they most trust across 36 categories. Overall, 80 products were selected as award winners. The items recognized here are the ones most likely to make future trips to the pharmacy more effective. ▶ **Nancy Cooper**, *Global Editor in Chief*

## Children

### CHILDREN'S COUGH & COLD RELIEF

- 1 Children's Dimetapp
- 2 Children's Robitussin
- 3 Mucinex Children's

### CHILDREN'S IMMUNE SYSTEM SUPPORT

- 1 Airborne
- 2 Emergen-C
- 3 Zarbee's

## METHODOLOGY

In the third annual BrandSpark American Pharmacists Trust Study, BrandSpark researchers identified OTC/Health categories where trust is important to consumers and where American pharmacists believe in the superiority of specific brands.

The winners were selected based on a survey of 401 pharmacists currently practicing in the United States who gave their top-of-mind, unaided opinions on which OTC/Health brands they trust the most in 36 categories.

The highest share of citations as Most Trusted in the category determined the winner, with other brands ranked based on share where at least 8 percent of citations was received. If the margin of citation share was less than 3 percent between brands, a tie was declared. \*

▶ **USAGE:** Permission or authorization from Best New Product Awards Inc. is required to reference the *Newsweek/BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards* win or use of the claim or logo in any communication.

▶ **LICENSING:** If your company is a winner, contact Adam Bellisario, Associate Vice-President, BrandSpark Most Trusted (ABellisario@Brandspark.com) to learn more about licensing options\* or the trust research.

\*BrandSpark can provide winning brands with additional supporting information.





Newsweek



**CHILDREN'S LIQUID  
COUGH SUPPRESSANT**

- 1 Children's Delsym
- 2 Children's Robitussin
- 3 Children's Dimetapp

**CHILDREN'S PAIN  
& FEVER RELIEF**

- 1 Children's Tylenol
- 2 Children's Motrin

**CHILDREN'S  
SLEEP SUPPORT**

- 1 Zarbee's
- 2 Children's Benadryl

**INFANT PAIN  
& FEVER RELIEF**

- 1 Infants' Tylenol
- 2 Infants' Motrin

**Cough, Cold & Flu**

**COLD SHORTENER**

- 1 Zicam
- 2 Cold-EEZE

**COUGH, COLD, & FLU  
MULTISYMPPTOM RELIEF**

- 1 Vicks DayQuil / NyQuil (Tie)
- 2 Mucinex / Robitussin / Tylenol (Tie)

**COUGH, COLD & FLU  
MULTISYMPPTOM RELIEF FOR  
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**

- 1 Coricidin HBP

**HOMEOPATHIC  
COLD & FLU TREATMENT**

- 1 Boiron
- 2 Hyland's Naturals / Sambucol / Zicam (Tie)

**LIQUID COUGH  
SUPPRESSANT**

- 1 Delsym
- 2 Robitussin

**Diabetes**

**CONTINUOUS  
GLUCOSE MONITOR**

- 1 FreeStyle Libre
- 2 Dexcom

**Ears & Eyes**

**CONTACT LENS  
SOLUTION**

- 1 Bausch + Lomb
- 2 Opti-Free

FROM LEFT: JACOB LUND/GETTY; HALFPOINT/GETTY



**Newsweek**



**CONTACT LENSES**

- 1 Acuvue
- 2 Bausch + Lomb

**EARACHE RELIEF**

- 1 Similasan
- 2 Debrox / Hyland's Naturals (Tie)

**EYE DROPS**

- 1 Systane
- 2 Refresh / Visine (Tie)

**Miscellaneous**

**DEHYDRATION RELIEF**

- 1 Pedialyte
- 2 Liquid I.V.
- 3 Gatorade

**SLEEP AID**

- 1 Unisom
- 2 Benadryl
- 3 Vicks ZzzQuil

**Pain**

**HOMEOPATHIC TOPICAL CREAM / GEL FOR PAIN RELIEF**

- 1 Arnicare

**LEG CRAMP RELIEF**

- 1 Hyland's Naturals

**NERVE PAIN RELIEF**

- 1 Nerve

**PAIN RELIEF PATCH**

- 1 Salonpas
- 2 Aspercreme

**Sexual Health**

**EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTIVE PILL (MORNING AFTER)**

- 1 Plan B One-Step

**OVER-THE-COUNTER BIRTH CONTROL PILL**

- 1 Opill

**OVULATION TEST**

- 1 Clearblue
- 2 First Response

## PREGNANCY TEST

1 Clearblue / First Response (Tie)

3 e.p.t

## Skin

### MOISTURIZER FOR ITCHY OR DRY SKIN

1 CeraVe

2 Aveeno / Eucerin (Tie)

### SCAR AND STRETCH MARK TREATMENT

1 Mederma

## Stomach

### ACID REDUCER

1 Pepcid

2 Prilosec OTC

### HEARTBURN RELIEF

1 Tums

2 Pepcid

3 Prilosec OTC

### LAXATIVE

1 Dulcolax / MiraLAX (Tie)

3 Senokot

## NAUSEA TREATMENT / RELIEF

1 Emetrol

2 Dramamine

3 Pepto-Bismol

## Supplements

### JOINT HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

1 Osteo Bi-Flex

## MEMORY SUPPORT SUPPLEMENT

1 Prevagen

## NIACIN SUPPLEMENT

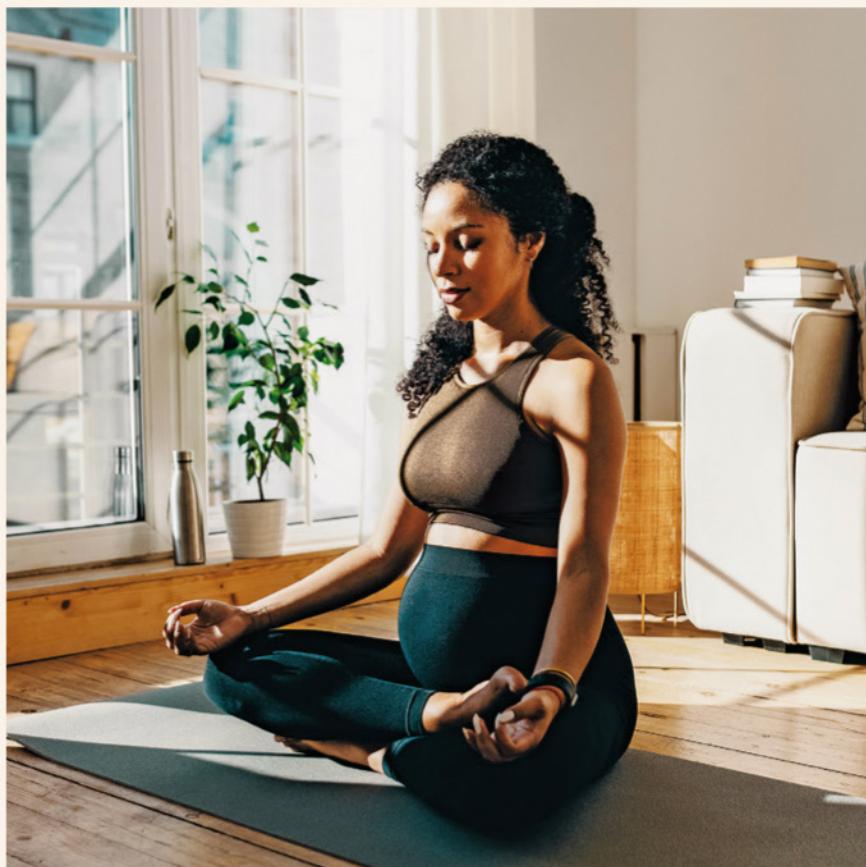
1 Nature Made

2 Nature's Bounty

## WOMEN'S PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENT

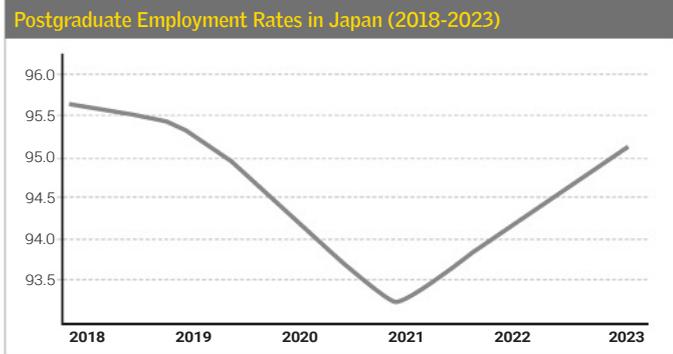
1 Culturelle Probiotics

2 Align Probiotics / Florajen (Tie)

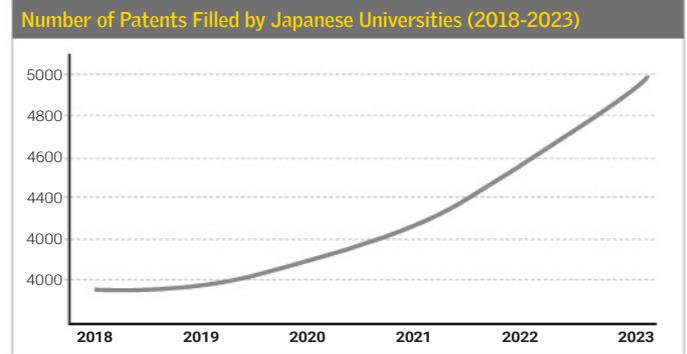


# Japan's Universities Evolve Toward Globalized Education

Education in Japan is undergoing a transformation to attract more international students, enhance global partnerships, boost innovation and adapt academic programs to today's globalized world.



Source: OECD Education at a Glance 2023



Source: JPO Status Report 2023

For decades, Japan's higher education system has been deeply intertwined with the nation's unique socioeconomic landscape. Traditionally, universities in Japan were closely aligned with national policies aimed at economic and social development, creating strong synergies with private companies and establishing advanced research facilities dedicated to national technologies. This Japan-centric approach has fostered significant technological advancements and a robust labor market, yet it has also limited the global presence and attractiveness of Japanese universities to international students and faculty.

The pressing need for globalization within Japan's higher education sector is now more evident than ever. As Japan grapples with prolonged economic stagnation and a looming demographic crisis, the government has prioritized revamping the education system to foster globally competitive human resources. The Kishida administration, for instance, has earmarked 300 billion yen to bolster the global standing of Japanese universities in science and technology research and aims to attract over 400,000 foreign students.

Despite these efforts, international students currently comprise only about 5 percent of Japan's tertiary education population, compared to over 20 percent in countries like the U.K. and Australia. This discrepancy highlights the challenges Japanese universities face in adapting to a rapidly globalizing world. However, recent initiatives and evolving strategies suggest a promising shift.

## Enhancing Global Values

Dr. Kazuhiro Chiba, president of the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT), emphasizes the importance of embracing and sharing Japan's rich cultural heritage while also fostering global values. "The most crucial aspect of education lies in embracing the rich values that Japan has nurtured throughout its extensive history," he states. "Our vision extends beyond economic success or groundbreaking in-

novations; it revolves around cultivating individuals who can contribute to global well-being, especially as we face environmental degradation and resource scarcity."

Dr. Chiba underscores the need for a distinctly Japanese educational experience that goes beyond merely offering English-language programs. "Japanese universities are rich in diversity and emphasize individuality based on innovation and originality. At TUAT, we aim to create opportunities for both Japanese and international students to delve into how to implement new ideas leading to innovation," he explains. This approach seeks to draw from Japan's unique cultural context while fostering a global outlook.

## Addressing Demographic Challenges

The demographic crisis in Japan, characterized by a shrinking population and an aging workforce, poses significant challenges to the country's economic vitality. Kamado Shigeharu, president of Nagaoka University of Technology, highlights the crucial role universities play in addressing these issues. "Diverse perspectives are essential in pushing forward innovation," he notes. "When Japanese students interact with foreign students, it creates a culture of community and diversity in ideas and thinking."

President Kamado also points out the advantages of Japan's safe environment and advanced facilities, coupled with the affordability offered by a weak yen. "Japan is one of the safest countries in the world and has some of the best facilities for students. Couple that with a weak yen, and there is a good opportunity for foreign students to come to study in Japan," he asserts. These factors, along with the practical training programs and strong industry-university collaborations, make Japan an attractive destination for international students.

## Enhancing Employment Opportunities

One of the criticisms of Japanese universities is the perceived difficulty international students face in securing employment post-

graduation. However, this trend is changing. Takeo Kikkawa, president of the International University of Japan (IUJ), emphasizes the increasing openness of Japan's corporate world to international graduates. "The trend has been changing over the past five years, with the number of foreign workers in Japanese companies more than doubling," he says.

IUJ, where over 90 percent of students come from abroad, has implemented frameworks to bridge the gap between students and employers. "We issue a résumé book annually to explain students' backgrounds and past careers, which we distribute to partnering companies," Dr. Kikkawa explains. This initiative helps international students navigate Japan's complex job market and increases their employment prospects.

## Leveraging Digital Transformation

Digital transformation (DX) and the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) are revolutionizing education globally, and Japan is no exception. Dr. Monte Cassim, president of Akita International University, discusses the impact of these technologies on Japan's education landscape. "The advent of DX technologies marks an irreversible transformation," he asserts. "COVID-19 accelerated this realization, offering alternatives to face-to-face interactions."

Dr. Cassim highlights the balance between digital convenience and the importance of interpersonal engagement. "While DX technologies have aided us in various ways, face-to-face learning remains crucial for building friendships and establishing interpersonal relationships," he notes. Akita International University has invested in upgrading its DX infrastructure to enhance learning outcomes while maintaining a strong emphasis on human interaction.

## Fostering Unique Educational Experiences

Japan's universities are striving to create unique educational experiences that attract international students. Dr. Yasuhiko Kawamura, president of Tokushima Uni-

versity, speaks to the benefits of university consolidation and collaboration. "There will be an increasing number of local universities undergoing consolidation to enhance collaboration in fostering innovative ideas and making education more efficient and attractive," he predicts.

Tokushima University, with its strong regional ties and advanced facilities, actively collaborates with other universities to offer a broader curriculum and more affordable education. "We are developing an online platform that brings together local universities to facilitate cooperation," Dr. Kawamura explains. This network aims to make education more accessible and enrich the student experience.

Dr. Takashi Irisawa, president of Ryukoku University, meanwhile emphasizes the integration of global and local perspectives as a key characteristic of his institution. "Ryukoku

University places a strong emphasis on language learning and integrates the positive aspects of Western education with the spirit of Buddhism," he states. This approach fosters a unique educational environment that resonates with both domestic and international students.

Dr. Irisawa highlights the importance of addressing contemporary social issues through education. "We are striving to create new values and address social issues such as poverty, conflict and education for all," he explains. Ryukoku University's commitment to these goals positions it as a hub for innovative and socially responsible education.

#### Tradition Meets Innovation

Japan's higher education sector is undergoing a significant transformation as it seeks to enhance its global outlook, research capabilities and teaching excellence. The concerted efforts

of universities and the government aim to create a more inclusive and diverse academic environment that attracts global talent.

The unique proposition offered by Japanese universities—a blend of advanced education, a vibrant technological ecosystem and a culturally rich society—makes Japan an increasingly attractive destination for international students and faculty. As Dr. Chiba of TUAT aptly puts it, the goal is to "nurture a higher level of skills, capabilities and qualities that transcend mere economic achievements" and to cultivate individuals who can contribute to global well-being.

By embracing both its rich cultural heritage and the demands of globalization, Japan's higher education sector is poised to become a dynamic hub for the world's brightest minds, fostering innovation and addressing the pressing challenges of our time.

# The International University of Japan: A Multicultural Hub of Diversity

The International University of Japan's portfolio offers graduate programs in International Relations and International Management whilst expanding into the digital transformation realm.

Established in 1982, the International University of Japan has become a multicultural hub for students to collaborate and innovate. Located in Niigata, the university campus offers students a unique backdrop of traditional scenery including rice fields and mountains.

"Our campus is located in an area of Japan surrounded by traditional scenery and culture all around, offering international students a truly unique experience."

**Takeo Kikkawa,**  
President, International  
University of Japan



Since its foundation, the university has been steadily growing—with over 5,000 alumni—and launching programs in both its Graduate School of International Relations and Graduate School of International Management. As well as offering traditional management programs such as MBAs, the university is expanding into the digital sphere, having recently launched its Digital Transformation Program in 2021. Takeo Kikkawa, president of the International University of Japan, notes that the launch of the Digital Transformation

Program allowed the university to expand its pool of students by "gathering students from countries like India and the Philippines, where they are interested in learning in Japan and then staying in Japan for work."

Such an expansion is made possible as the university is one of the few in Japan that offers programs in English. Due to this, Mr. Kikkawa explains that "the biggest asset of our graduate school is the diversity, with 90 percent of students coming from 68 different countries." Not only are the students from a diverse background but so is the faculty, with over half of its 40 members from overseas. The university is also making great progress in creating a gender-diverse environment, having achieved a male-to-female ratio of around 55 percent male and 45 percent female students.

Mr. Kikkawa believes that diversity is the university's biggest asset, citing the important role the university plays as a hub for multinational students—a principle the university prides itself in with its motto: "Create a space for the world to collaborate together."

The university facilitates this in various ways such as with the establishment of its IUJ Research Institute in 1997, bringing together four existing research institutes—The Center for Japan-U.S. Relations, The Institute for Middle Eastern Studies, The Research Institute for Asian Development and The International Management Research Institute—by creating a space for collaboration on challenges faced by modern Japanese society as well as society on a global scale. Additionally, the university works with European and Asian universities to provide exchanges as well as working with partners including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) offering scholarships to encourage overseas students to study at the university.



Active learning environment at IUJ

When discussing what the future holds, Mr. Kikkawa outlines a collaboration with JICA to launch new programs under a new department focused on climate change.



[www.iuj.ac.jp](http://www.iuj.ac.jp)



IUJ's entrance in a beautiful setting



# Contributing to Society through World-Class Buddhist Education

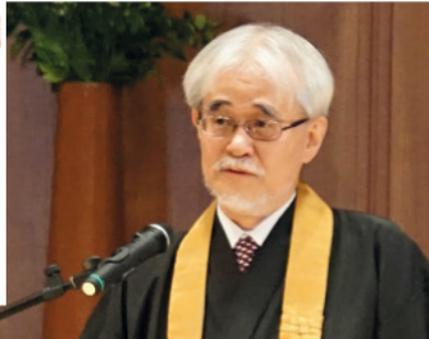
With over 380 years of history, Ryukoku University continues to foster the institution's spirit of tradition, innovation and ambition, creating new knowledge opportunities while championing the values of altruism.

Ryukoku University has a long history dating back to the Gakuryo—a Buddhist seminary established in 1639 in the precincts of Nishi Hongwanji Temple. Ryukoku University celebrated its 380<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2019, and its higher educational and research activities are the oldest in Japan.

Such long traditions have fostered the spirit of deep human insight. This insight is inspired by the teachings of Shinran Shonin, who lived through the turbulent Kamakura Period (1185-1333 CE) and established Jodo Shinshu Buddhism (Pure Land Buddhism). Since Ryukoku University's establishment, its educational and research activities have continuously adhered to the teachings of Jodo Shinshu as its founding spirit. While tradition may seem old-fashioned, it cannot be sustained unless we apply its philosophy when experiencing the realities of society in our day-to-day lives. As we face various contradictions and problems, our traditions continue to be renewed.

Ryukoku University's custom of respecting innovation and ambition is clearly born from its traditions. The creation of new knowledge opportunities is a feature Ryukoku University is proudest

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Takashi Irisawa, President, Ryukoku University



Fukakusa Campus

of, as demonstrated by its great educational reforms during the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the Otani Expedition (known for its research exploration of the Silk Road), various projects which promoted advanced research during the postwar period, and being the first Buddhist univer-



Omiya Campus

sity in Japan to establish a Faculty of Science and Technology, as well as a Faculty of Agriculture. However, the greatest characteristic of Ryukoku University is its atmosphere, which promotes harmonious living with others.

In recent years, an increasing number of students are show-

ing interest in activities which contribute to society. Ryukoku University promotes "Buddhist SDGs," a set of principles linking Buddhism and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, with its core being the behavioral philosophy of *jisei rita* (introspective altruism). This philosophy expresses the ambition to continuously reflect on one's own innate selfishness, to consider one's existence consisting of countless connections with others, and to behave in a way that contributes to the well-being of all, with importance placed on relationships. In the modern world, people are becoming more and more separate from each other. At Ryukoku University, however, we emphasize altruism and foster the spirit of cherishing all lives. Altruism is the opposite of exclusiveness and is a spirit which has long been nurtured and passed down through Buddhist teachings. Our students are made aware of the importance of helping and supporting each other as they study at Ryukoku University.

True learning begins when a student realizes the ignorance of their own narrow viewpoint. Ryukoku University fosters the strength to face social issues and overcome difficulties.

**Campuses, Facilities and Networks Within Japan and Overseas**

Ryukoku University is a comprehensive university with approximately 20,000 students enrolled in nine undergraduate faculties, one junior college and 10 graduate schools in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences on three unique campuses. Fukakusa Campus combines the wisdom of social sciences to create new knowledge and values in a rapidly changing social environment dedicated to nature positivity. Seta Campus is based in the natural sciences and drives value creation and social change by addressing environmental issues such as carbon neutrality. The Omiya Campus, the university's "origin campus," is designed to deepen learning and research in the humanities, and boasts a world-renowned library and the nearby Ryukoku Museum.



Ryukoku University students



ings with the public. A permanent display of particular interest is a 15-meter-long tunnel (opposite page, top) consisting of digitally recreated religious wall paintings from the Number 15 Cave of the Bezeklik Cave Temple system, located on the outskirts of Turpan in the Uyghur Autonomous Region and said to have been the apex of Uyghur Buddhist art.

Overseas, Ryukoku University has bases for education and research in the United States, both in Berkeley, California, and through the Buddhist Study Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. Numerous

students also study abroad through our extensive network of partner institutions in 44 countries and regions throughout the world. Looking to the future, in 2027 a new eight-story building will be completed in front of Kyoto Station which will serve as a joint base for Ryukoku University, corporations, financial institutions and other organizations to foster human resources capable of solving various social issues.



Ryukoku University students

Ryukoku Museum, founded in 2011, is the only comprehensive museum of Buddhism in Japan. Located approximately 12 minutes on foot from Kyoto Station (in front of Nishi Hongwanji Temple), it offers a diverse variety of exhibitions introducing the birth of Buddhism in India, its spread through Asia and the development of Japanese Buddhism up to the present, in addition to special themed exhibitions.

Special cultural artifacts are displayed to deepen understanding of Buddhist culture, promote academic research and share research find-

**Yunus Social Business Research Center**

Ryukoku University is committed to the aforementioned action philosophy of *jisei rita*, and to education which respects diversity. To this end, the Yunus Social Business Research Center (YSBRC) was established in 2019, the university's 380<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to conduct research and carry out practical activities for a sustainable society.



Muhammad Yunus

YSBRC works to create social values by embodying SDGs from a Buddhist perspective and carrying out the local implementation of social business. In particular, the center aims to realize its goals by harnessing the power of the younger generation through collaboration with other Yunus Social Business Research Centers around the world.

We hope that each student will open "the door to life" and contribute to society as a sincere citizen, and we are confident that they will have a great impact while keeping their Ryukoku University education in mind.

You, Unlimited

# Less Me More We

あなただけの世界から、 私たちを想う世界へ。

# Nagaoka University of Technology a Top Choice for International Engineering Students

One of the world's safest countries offering students best-in-class facilities across the board, Japan is an increasingly popular choice for international students, with institutions like Nagaoka University of Technology fostering a culture of innovation, community and diversity, ensuring a brighter future for its alumni, Japan and the wider world.



"I aim to cultivate leaders who will drive the future and create a university that generates innovation."

Kamado Shigeharu,  
President, Nagaoka  
University of Technology

Promoting cross-culture collaboration and innovation in the fields of technology and engineering, Nagaoka University of Technology offers a solid educational framework that has allowed its Japanese alumni to succeed overseas, while many of its international graduates go on to build successful careers and lives in Japan. Given Japan's demographic issue—with its aging population causing a shortfall in the labor force that is projected to reach 11

million by 2040—preparing international students for the Japanese workplace is both a commendable and necessary endeavor led by world-class educational institutions such as Nagaoka University of Technology.

While international students make up just 5 percent of the overall Japanese student population, at Nagaoka University of Technology the figure has reached as high as 13 percent. President Kamado Shigeharu attributes this high figure to the university's efforts at building a globally-minded institution and its successful Twinning Program for foreign students.

As part of the Twinning Program, students are taught in Japanese, while receiving supporting Japanese language classes, and have the chance to go on to undertake OTJ (on-the-job) training and complete a master's degree. "Sixty-five percent of foreign students find a workplace after completing this program, meaning they are working as fully-fledged engineers in Japanese companies," says President Kamado, who also gives some examples of real success stories.

First, he mentions a graduate who joined a company in the chemical industry and succeeded

in improving efficiency through a product developed in collaboration with a faculty member from the university. Having lived in Japan for 19 years, this graduate has obtained permanent residency, lives with their family in Japan and plans to continue their children's education in the country. And second, he points to a graduate who completed

abroad programs, and conduct overseas staff training to enhance globalization and specialization of our staff. Through such initiatives, we believe that globalization and diversity within the campus are being promoted. One of our Japanese graduates who had overseas OTJ experience in a partner company became the president of the firm's



3D printing to create a product prototype

the master's program and joined an electrical machinery manufacturing company. After nationalizing and working abroad, this graduate returned to their home country and secured employment with a foreign company associated with Japan.

"Our international graduates are not only thriving in Japan but are also making significant contributions worldwide and fostering opportunities for the next generation to receive education in Japan," adds President Kamado.

With students being taught by both Nagaoka and foreign faculty, the Twinning Program is a prime example of how the university leverages MOUs (memoranda of understanding) with international institutions for collaborative education programs. "In terms of expansion, we are looking to increase the number of MOUs with international universities," adds President Kamado.

"We also offer overseas OTJ and bidirectional short-term study

overseas local subsidiary in his 30s. His experience not only helped him acquire language skills and expertise in his field, but also enabled him to understand culture, customs and ways of thinking, which contributed to his career path.

"For our university, MOUs with overseas institutions are not just a tool for promoting personal exchanges and collaborative research, but are intended to promote collaborative education under the basis of true mutual understanding, where both parties are more deeply involved in each other's education." This, he argues, enables the cultivation of individuals with diverse perspectives on cultures and values, capable of generating innovation, in addition to possessing advanced knowledge and skills.

"In the future," he adds, "we are seeking partners with whom we will work together to develop engineers in countries and regions where industrial development will accelerate."



Prepared triaxial apparatus for soil testing



Karate practice (club activity)



Microstructure analysis with high-resolution SEM



Nagaoka University of Technology 50th Anniversary

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knowledge for the future**

[www.nagaokaut.ac.jp](http://www.nagaokaut.ac.jp)

# Nurturing the Next Generation of Innovation

For 150 years, the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT) has been promoting innovation and Japanese values, with the institution now looking to forge MOUs overseas in order to further spread its vision.



"Our hope is that, within the next five years, we can nurture a pool of talented individuals."

Kazuhiro Chiba, President, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology

In the realm of global education, Japan stands out as an enticing destination for aspiring individuals seeking a blend of tradition and innovation. However, the ongoing challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and concerns about language barriers and employment prospects have led to a decline in international student enrollment.

Kazuhiro Chiba, president of the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT), sheds light on the unique educational experience the university offers and its commitment to cultivating global leaders. President Chiba emphasizes the distinctive value of studying in Japan, asserting: "The most crucial aspect of education lies in embracing the rich values that Japan has nurtured throughout its extensive history."

He envisions TUAT as a platform for cultivating individuals capable of contributing to global endeavors by drawing inspiration from Ja-

pan's cultural reservoir. And whilst acknowledging the traditional pursuit of economic success, President Chiba articulates a broader vision, stating: "Our vision extends beyond these boundaries."

He advocates for an inclusive and considerate way of living in harmony with nature, addressing impending global challenges such as environmental degradation and resource scarcity. The mission is to enhance well-being on a global scale by nurturing skills and qualities that transcend mere economic achievements.

In responding to criticisms about Japanese universities lacking a distinctly Japanese experience, President Chiba explains TUAT's approach to innovation-driven programs.

"At TUAT, we want to create an opportunity not only for Japanese students but also for international students studying in Japan to delve into how to implement new ideas that lead to innovation," he says. In this sense, the university seeks not to emulate other successful models, but to create a uniquely Japanese educational experience that fosters innovation.



Professor Deborah Terry AO, Vice-Chancellor and President of UQ, and President Chiba

TUAT's commitment to global collaboration is also evident in partnerships with universities worldwide. President Chiba highlights collaborations addressing energy and agricultural challenges with the University of Queensland and other international universities. These initiatives involve students from different nations working together to find innovative solutions.

"The university's emphasis on understanding the specific needs and desires of people globally aligns with our commitment to fostering a culture of innovation

and collaboration," he says. And as TUAT looks toward its future, his dream is clear—to witness a generation of young individu-

als embracing new values and translating them into impactful action, contributing to a brighter and more sustainable future.

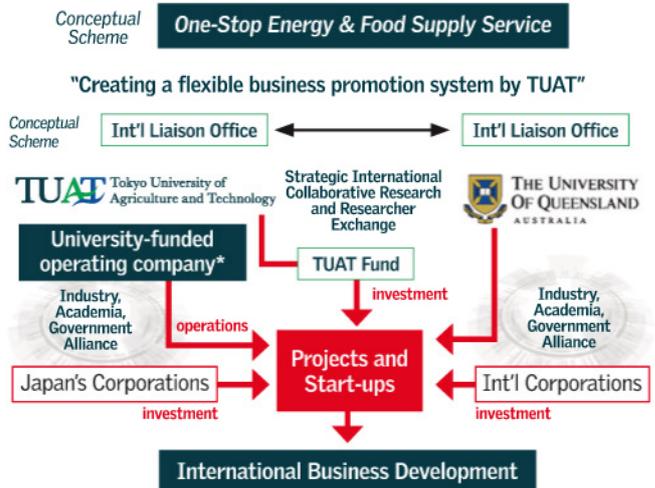
## Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (TUAT)

TUAT is Japan's national university with 150 years of history, and it has played a central role in the food (agriculture) and sericulture industries that had supported the Japanese economy for over a century.

Today, TUAT connects countries around the world through its cutting-edge science and technology to conduct educational and research activities needed for international cooperation and solving global issues.



## International Industry-Academia-Government Alliance for Energy and Food Supply Business Development



\* University-funded external company operating independently as an organization to create new businesses while maintaining cooperative ties with TUAT

Innovative Forest Business Development

Systematic Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Supply Chain Development

Global Economy and Food Production Chain Development

### TUAT Paving the Way with Project-based Startups

- Utilizing its management infrastructure to develop various international businesses
- The first national university in Japan to establish an authorized fund in collaboration with private venture capital firms
- Incorporating its strong leadership to promote international collaborative businesses
- Leveraging its support for university-launched startups that solve global issues by improving food self-sufficiency, global energy and food supply, and building a decarbonized society

**TUAT** Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology



Koganei campus



Fuchu campus



MOVIES

# Do Films Have a Future?

With the movie industry under threat from streaming and AI, experts predict how Tinseltown will look in 10 years' time

"I had to go to cat therapy. By the end of the film, I was madly in love with them." ▶ P.56



A/P/GETTY; TOP RIGHT: JEFF SPICER/GETTY/PARAMOUNT PICTURES

**IT'S BEEN A TOUGH FEW YEARS FOR** Hollywood. COVID-19, strikes and the rise of artificial intelligence have battered the industry in ways no one could have foreseen, so how will it look in 2034?

Entertainment stalwarts such as Disney, Paramount and Warner Brothers reported losses in 2023. Blockbusters flopped and theaters failed to regain their pre-pandemic profitability.

Studios are attempting to get back on track but production activity is still down, while Wall Street's faith in the industry remains shaken. It's clear Hollywood is undergoing a shift, but how will that affect it over the next 10 years? *Newsweek* asked the experts.

### Will AI Transform Hollywood?

*Variety* has dubbed it the "Hollywood AI Crisis," with everyone from actors to writers, production teams and maybe even directors at risk of being replaced by AI.

The Concept Art Assn. and the Animation Guild recently surveyed 300 entertainment industry leaders and discovered that three-quarters expected AI to abolish, reduce or merge positions at their companies. Researchers estimate around 204,000 jobs will be negatively impacted by the shift before 2026.

However, Guy Fortt, partner at Starfury Productions, believes it's not all bad news for Hollywood creatives. "The integration of AI and technology into film and TV production shows promise," he told *Newsweek*. "It enhances creative possibilities, reduces costs and creates more personalized and immersive content."

Fortt isn't the only one to see the creative and cost-cutting benefits of

AI. Filmmaker Tyler Perry halted a planned \$800 million expansion to his Atlanta studio in February after discovering software platform Sora. Created by OpenAI, the video generator is capable of crafting lifelike scenes from text commands.

Although the software has the potential to shake up the industry, it is also still in its early stages and, like many AI-generated creations, the footage has its flaws. Examples of glitches include misplaced limbs and floating furniture, and Sora reportedly struggles to replicate complex body movements.

However, Fortt said that AI will continue to affect different aspects of the industry, such as content creation, distribution and audience interaction.

One area particularly vulnerable to AI is scriptwriting. Fortt predicts technology such as chatbot ChatGPT being used to generate storylines or tailor scripts to better suit audiences' tastes, using

data garnered from AI that analyzes viewer preferences.

Fortt suspects that animation and visual-effect jobs "will be in high demand," with workers able to "enhance visual storytelling without the extensive manual labor typically required."

Unfortunately, the future looks less certain for actors, who Fortt said could be "easily automated." AI partly spurred the 2023 Writers Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists strikes, with actors and writers wanting guarantees that studios won't replace them with the technology.

However, deepfakes have yet to reach the level of an accomplished thespian. "Acting talent will still be

by

**SOPHIE  
LLOYD**

crucial for emotional and nuanced performances,” Fortt added. “While [AI] might reduce the number of certain traditional jobs, it also opens up opportunities for new roles.”

**Will Movies Get More Diverse?**

According to a survey conducted by streamer Tubi and The Harris Poll, three-quarters of millennials and Generation Z wanted more diversity and representation in their content, while 71 percent would like to see more film and TV programs developed by independent and smaller creators.

“There is a growing shift among underrepresented content creators who are tired of waiting for the big studios and corporate giants to fund their projects,” Nubia DuVall Wilson, partner at Starfury Productions, told *Newsweek*. “The future will see more marginalized filmmakers—BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc.—producing films and securing distribution on their own.”

**Will Streaming Continue to Reign Supreme?**

Fortt believes streaming will continue to dominate due to a combination of variety and convenience.

Streaming services were a driving force in the strikes, with platforms disrupting the traditional payment structure for actors and writers. Deals were reached with both unions in September, but it appears that streamers have changed tack following the strikes and are becoming more particular about the projects they choose. This means fewer films and TV shows will get the green light and are more likely to be canceled if they don’t immediately rake in viewers.

“With lower streaming audiences,

something has to give,” filmmaker Neil Chase told *Newsweek*. “The future is less about big-budget tentpoles, remakes, reboots and sequels, as it will be with smaller movies that focus on original content and are geared toward specific genre audiences.”

Chase believes last year’s *Godzilla Minus One* is the “blueprint” for the next decade of filmmaking. Produced for less than \$15 million, the monster movie earned over \$115 million at the global box office.

“It focused on a rock-solid script with relatable characters, strong dialogue and riveting action scenes,” Chase explained. “It delivered everything its target audience was looking for, and maybe that’s the biggest

takeaway for Hollywood. The next 10 years may be a little leaner than many are used to, but the rise in storytelling quality will win back much of what’s been lost.”

**Will Movie Theaters Survive?**

In 2019, movie theaters raked in \$11.4 billion across America. But COVID-19 changed all that, and they grossed just \$2.3 billion in 2020. Many films landed directly on streaming platforms.

Now, it has become common for films to jointly release on streaming services alongside theater runs. And cinema releases get a shorter viewing window before becoming available to rent or stream.

Yet Fortt remains optimistic.

“Many people still enjoy the unique experience of watching a movie on the big screen,” he said. “A solid audience base still values the theater experience.”

► *Sophie Lloyd is a pop culture and entertainment reporter at NEWSWEEK. Contact her at s.lloyd@newsweek.com*

**“Something has to give. The future is less about big-budget tentpoles, reboots and sequels.”**



**TAKING ACTION** Strikers walk the SAG-AFTRA picket line at Fox Studios in California in October 2023.

MICHAEL TULLBERG/GETTY

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**INDUSTRY INSIGHTS**



**Nick Goraczowski**  
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President & CEO  
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**Maurizio Mazzocchi**  
Chief Executive Officer  
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When we talk about high-end watches, the first thing that comes to mind is tradition. We are less about tradition; we're driven by the future. Priced at least \$400,000 each, Purnell watches have fused cutting-edge technology with a fun demeanor partnering with sports, entertainment and other lifestyle icons worldwide.

**STARPOINT PROPERTIES**  
DECADES OF DELIVERING ASYMMETRICAL RETURNS

**Paul Daneshrad**  
Founder & CEO  
**StarPoint Properties**

**How StarPoint Delivers Asymmetric Returns: Insights into Property Investment**

Discover how the experts at StarPoint Properties are helping real estate investors benefit from tax-efficient returns.

▣ A real estate investment firm with over 35 years of experience, StarPoint Properties has made a name for itself by consistently delivering above-market returns through an innovative and disciplined approach to real estate investing. With a portfolio exceeding a billion dollars and returns that continually outshine the S&P 500, Dow Jones, or most private equity funds, what's been the key to their enduring success?

"A lot of real estate firms are specialists in one area," says StarPoint Founder & CEO, Paul Daneshrad. "They'll just do multi-family or retail, and they're stuck with that. If all you sell are apples, you always think apples are the best and need apples to be a performer all the time."

At StarPoint, they remain agile, operating what they call a 'Prime and Prime' strategy—looking for prime markets and prime real estate classes that will outperform in certain markets. The firm's agility and entrepreneurial spirit result in them identifying lower-risk, higher-return opportunities in the wider real estate arena.

When you couple their highly skilled management team with a real estate network they've built over decades, StarPoint can pinpoint standout investments in any section of the property market. With a deep following of institutions and private investors, StarPoint has both the insight and financial backing needed to capitalize on opportunities quickly.

The firm's tax-efficient structure further sets it apart. "In opportunity zones," explains Paul, "if you hold an asset for 10 years, you don't pay any taxes on your gains. It's basically the only program in the country where there are no taxes on any future profits."

With StarPoint leveraging depreciation and 1031 exchanges as well as opportunity zones, the company is proving to be a hugely attractive investment option and one of the most tax efficient investment vehicles available.

With a looming US economic crisis tied to structural debt issues, StarPoint remains proactive in delivering a reliable investment solution. By strategically capitalizing on the current real estate cycle and using reduced property prices as a buying opportunity, the firm aims to double in size over the next 3 to 5 years. A shooting star, indeed.

**PURNELL**



# The Rise of J-Beauty:

## TRADITION MEETS INNOVATION

'J-BEAUTY,' WHICH ENCOMPASSES COSMETICS, FASHION AND WELLNESS, SHOWCASES JAPAN'S SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE ON GLOBAL CONSUMER TRENDS AND THE RETAIL AND MANUFACTURING SECTORS. TOGETHER, THESE INDUSTRIES CONVERGE TO OFFER HIGH-QUALITY, PERSONALIZED AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS THAT CAPTIVATE BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC MARKETS.

**T**he global cosmetics, beauty and wellness industries are continuously evolving, with different regions showcasing their unique approaches to consumer tastes and changing demands, from skincare to wider trends including fashion and healthcare products.

Recently, the rise of so-called 'J-Beauty' has captured international attention, symbolizing a cross-sector confluence of innovation, tradition and meticulous craftsmanship that is distinct to Japanese culture. In this special feature, we delve into the diverse fields contributing to this trend, profiling key industry players and exploring how Japan is today reshaping global beauty and fashion standards.

### COSMETICS

Japanese cosmetics have long been admired for their quality and effectiveness. Companies like Cathy Chemical Industry are at the forefront of this trend. Hiroyuki Harada, president of Cathy Chemical Industry, emphasizes the importance of personalized skincare solutions facilitated by digital technologies. "At our shops, our beauty staff is constantly communicating with customers to find a solution. They take a look at the customer's skin and ask questions about their lifestyle or eating habits to make the best proposal," Mr. Harada explains. This personalized approach, combined with digital tools to educate staff, ensures that customers receive tailored skincare advice, enhancing the effectiveness of product selection.

Midori Miyazaki, president of DHC Corporation, attributes the success of their award-winning Deep Cleansing Oil to its organic ingredients. "One of the keys to our great success is the utilization of organic olive oil from Spain. It maximizes cleansing capacity while reducing facial stimulation," she says. This emphasis on natural ingredients and minimizing skin irritation aligns with the broader J-Beauty philosophy of gentle, effective skincare.

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The intersection of health and beauty is another defining feature of J-Beauty. Takashi

Tajima, president and CEO of Naturally Plus, highlights the growing acceptance of supplements in Japan. "With increasing health consciousness, supplements have become more mainstream. Our high-quality supplements like Super Lutein and Izumio hydrogen-infused water support our customers' healthy lifestyles," Mr. Tajima notes. The company has leveraged functional food labeling to clearly communicate the benefits of their products, appealing to health-conscious consumers.

Brands like Naturally Plus are also increasingly focusing on preservative-free products, recognizing the demand for purity in skincare and health supplements. Such an approach caters to consumers looking for safer, more natural options while helping build a loyal customer base both domestically and internationally.

For instance, GLYLOID, a product by MP Gokyo Food & Chemical, showcases how traditional ingredients can be reimaged through innovation. President Hidemitsu Wakita explains, "GLYLOID, purified tamarind seed gum, has a unique viscosity similar to honey. It's used in sauces, dressings and low-fat mayo, offering a stable, natural alternative to chemical emulsifiers." This innovative product also has applications in the cosmetics industry, aligning with the trend towards conscious beauty.

### FASHION

Japanese fashion is renowned for its attention to detail and quality, characteristics that are gaining traction globally. Takuya Murayama, president of SB Planning, discusses the appeal of Japanese fashion overseas. "The Japanese have been very particular about creating goods with minute details. This detailed mindset is welcomed by high-fashion countries like France or Italy," he explains. This meticulous approach, rooted in the Japanese manufacturing mindset of *monozukuri*, or craftsmanship, is driving the popularity of Japanese apparel internationally.

Environmental sustainability is another critical concern in the fashion industry. Mr. Murayama notes the shift towards more environmentally friendly practices, such as locally contained production to reduce transportation footprints. "This type of production is a way to contribute to less-

ening environmental burdens," he says. Companies like SB Planning are leading the charge in creating high-quality, sustainable fashion that appeals to conscious consumers worldwide.

Takahiko Takaura, president of MARUTAKA IRYO, also emphasizes the importance of durable, recyclable fashion products and their impact on society. "Our products are pretty durable and often resold as recyclable products. However, we have not been reselling the recycled product ourselves. Moving forward, we plan to set up our own shops for recycled products, and we aim to offer durable recycled products tailored to different communities at affordable prices," he explains.

Uniqlo, Japan's flagship global retail giant, exemplifies this trend by emphasizing a philosophy that promotes versatile, high-quality and sustainable clothing. The company's initiatives, such as recycling old clothes and using environmentally friendly materials, underscore Japan's commitment to responsible fashion.

Whilst Japanese fabric and clothing makers follow Uniqlo's lead on sustainability, the sector at large is characterized by traditional craftsmanship but with a growing adoption of cutting-edge technology to improve operational efficiencies. Maruhisa, led by President Kiminobu Hiraishi, exemplifies this approach. The company started as a producer of *tabi* socks and has evolved to meet modern demands. "We are characterized by the development of fabrics in our own factories, and we handle all genres of clothing," Mr. Hiraishi states. This ability to adapt and innovate while maintaining traditional craftsmanship has become a hallmark of Japanese manufacturing more widely.

### RETAIL AND E-COMMERCE

The rise of e-commerce has transformed the retail landscape, enabling Japanese companies to reach global audiences. Takahiro Goto, president and CEO of Shinnihonseyaku, contrasts J-Beauty with the more elaborate K-Beauty routines. "Japanese beauty embraces a simpler approach with a focus on high-quality products," he says. This simplicity, combined with the use of e-commerce platforms, allows Japanese beauty brands to

appeal to international consumers seeking effective, straightforward skincare solutions.

NANGA INC., an outdoor apparel company, has also adapted to the e-commerce boom. President Tomoyuki Yokota describes their dual approach: "We provide products exclusive to online sales and retain an offline (in-store) presence to ensure comprehensive customer engagement. It has only been six years since we started our online sales platform but since its establishment, we've made efforts to make sure our entire product lineup is available online. Having said this, there is more that we can do as our platform is currently only available in Japan." When it comes to brand recognition and global expansion, while the company does not offer overseas shipping through its e-commerce store, it has made steady efforts to be present at trade shows and exhibitions, including in New York and Paris.

The global eyewear market is also expanding, and Japanese companies like EYEVAN Inc. are capitalizing on this trend by focusing on personalized, high-end products. Noriyuki Yamamoto, president and CEO of EYEVAN, emphasizes the importance of in-store experiences in tandem with harnessing the added opportunities that come with e-commerce. "We offer eye examinations and adjustments that cannot be experienced online. Customers can customize

their eyewear in terms of color or patterns at our flagship stores," Mr. Yamamoto explains. This focus on personalized, luxurious eyewear ensures that customers receive products tailored to their unique preferences and needs.

**DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS**

Japan's aging and shrinking population presents both challenges and opportunities for J-Beauty businesses and other fashion brands, manufacturers and retailers. Hiroshi Ueno, president of Intermestic Inc., highlights the need for experienced employees in the eyewear industry. "Our products require technical expertise, and the perpetual accumulation of technology is important," he says. The aging population also represents a market for products that cater to their specific needs, offering opportunities for growth.

This demographic shift also influences product development and marketing strategies. For instance, cosmetics companies are focusing on anti-aging products and targeting older consumers with specific skincare needs. Additionally, fashion brands are creating lines that cater to mature customers, emphasizing comfort and elegance.

As a result of this shift, rebranding and cultural repositioning are strategies Japa-

nese companies are using to stay relevant in a competitive market. Yoshihide Kanzaki, president of TOA Inc., explains their recent rebranding from Nihon Kolmar. "The new name reflects our philosophy of 'Total Outsourcing Access' - or 'TOA' - emphasizing our commitment to quality and sustainability," Mr. Kanzaki states. This shift aims to better position the company in a market where consumer awareness of sustainability is growing.

**THE FUTURE OF J-BEAUTY**

The rise of the J-Beauty trend and its pillar industries is a testament to the innovation, quality and craftsmanship inherent in Japan. From cosmetics and fashion to manufacturing and retail, Japanese companies are setting new standards in the global consumer markets. As these sectors continue to evolve, driven by both tradition and cutting-edge technology, J-Beauty is poised to remain a significant influence in the world of beauty and beyond.

The fusion of *monozukuri*, sustainability and personalized customer experiences is at the core of this appeal. As consumers worldwide seek products that align with their values and lifestyle preferences, Japanese brands are well-positioned to meet these demands.

**SB PLANNING: REVOLUTIONIZING APPAREL**  
*with Designer Freedom*

JAPANESE COMPANY SB PLANNING SPECIALIZES IN CASUAL APPAREL, OFFERING DESIGN, PRODUCTION AND LICENSING OF PRODUCTS, FROM BAGS TO JEANS.

**E**stablished in 2006, Japanese business SB Planning specializes in adult and children's apparel. The company offers both OEM (original equipment manufacturing) and ODM (original design manufacturing) services, carrying out everything from material procurement and product planning proposals to made-to-order production, as well as offering its own brands.

Takuya Murayama, president of SB Planning, explains that what makes the company unique is its management philosophy, allowing designers the freedom to create their own designs without having a strategy imposed on them. Mr. Murayama highlights: "We listen to the voices of the creators to understand what they want to create and convert that into a business."

An example of this philosophy in practice is the company's collaboration with designer Yoshiyuki Hayashi on its flagship brand, Resolute. Mr. Murayama explains that "Hayashi was given free rein to express himself through his patterns to produce denim jeans created with Japanese craftsmanship, manufactured on exclusive looms in the Niimi sewing center in Okayama." The company's other brand, Lantern, was conceived



**"Our designers convert inspiration into ideas and products, applying the monozukuri (Japanese manufacturing) spirit."**

**Takuya Murayama**  
**PRESIDENT**



by one of its in-house designers, who wished to create fashionable heat wear. Lantern's collection incorporates a USB rechargeable battery into padded clothing that allows the customer to adjust the temperature. SB Planning is currently operating in China and Southeast Asia but is looking to expand its presence in the European and American markets.



**“The beauty of the shapes helps make our best-selling products.”**

**Noriyuki Yamamoto**  
PRESIDENT & CEO, EYEVAN INC.

# EYEING GLOBAL EXPANSION

## *with Luxury Craftsmanship*

REVOLUTIONIZING EYEWEAR FROM MERE VISION CORRECTION TO FASHION ACCESSORY FOR OVER 50 YEARS, EYEVAN CREATES NEW VALUE AND ENHANCES LIFESTYLES WITH TRADITIONAL JAPANESE CRAFTSMANSHIP AND CONTINUOUS INNOVATION.

**F**ounded in 1972 under the concept of “eyewear for dressing as a fashion accessory,” EYEVAN became Japan’s first fashion eyewear brand. Half a century later, as the global market continues to evolve, the company has its sights set on opportunities presented by Japan’s renowned craftsmanship and the current economic climate.

“Everyone recognizes that ‘Made in Japan’ products are the best in terms of quality, and this fact has been proven globally,” says company president and CEO Noriyuki Yamamoto, who appreciates that this reputation is crucial as EYEVAN aims to expand its presence.

Japanese reliability along with the yen’s depreciation have created a unique advantage for EYEVAN, with massive overseas orders arriving due to the fact that international customers can buy the firm’s products much more cheaply. This economic shift aligns perfectly with its strategy to capitalize on its high-quality, luxurious eyewear offerings.

Unlike others, however, the company’s focus is on in-store experiences, where a commitment to quality and customer satisfaction is paramount.

“We are focusing more on offline, real experiences, and more personalized purchases from our customers rather than an online channel,” says Mr. Yamamoto.

This approach ensures the full benefit of services like eye examinations and personalized adjustments, which cannot be replicated online, while sustainability remains a cornerstone of EYEVAN’s philosophy.

“We offer very good products that can be used for an extended amount of time, we’re talking five to ten years,” Mr. Yamamoto emphasizes, promoting longevity and quality.

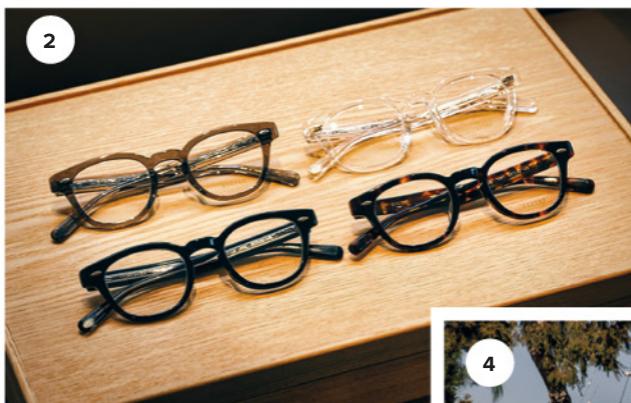
As the global eyewear market continues to grow, EYEVAN is well-positioned to expand its reach.

“In North America we do see more room for potential growth and the same can be said in Europe too, particularly Italy,” the president and CEO says, highlighting a recent venture in Los Angeles.

This growth keeps the company’s dedication to combining traditional Japanese craftsmanship with modern luxury at its very heart.

“EYEVAN is defining and communicating Japanese culture through the medium of eyewear to the rest of the world, demonstrating the highest-quality ‘Made in Japan’ products that anyone would be proud of,” Mr. Yamamoto concludes.

**1** Brand: EYEVAN / Model: E-0505. **2** Brand: EYEVAN / Model: Webb. **3** THE EYEVAN KYOTO Gion. **4** EYEVAN pop-up store in LA. **5** THE EYEVAN NAGOYA Sakae.





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# NANGA: JAPANESE HERITAGE

## *Meets Outdoor Innovation*

NANGA EXCELS IN HIGH-QUALITY DOWN PRODUCTS LIKE JACKETS AND SLEEPING BAGS, BLENDING JAPANESE CRAFTSMANSHIP WITH MODERN INNOVATION.

**F**ounded in 1941 as Yokota Sewing in Shiga prefecture, Japan, Nanga Co., Ltd. has grown from its humble beginnings in the futon industry to become a respected name in the outdoor equipment sector. The company's journey from producing traditional Japanese futons to crafting high-performance down products is a testament to its commitment to quality and innovation.

Originally part of the thriving Omi cotton industry, Yokota Sewing expanded in 1950 to undertake sewing for major futon manufacturers. The pivotal moment came in 1988 when Nanga began making sleeping bags at the request of a major domestic outdoor brand. This venture laid the foundation for the company's future. The name "Nanga," adopted in 1995, is inspired by Nanga Parbat, one of the Himalayas' most challenging peaks, reflecting the company's aspirations for excellence and endurance.

Tomoyuki Yokota, the current president, joined the company in 2001 and played a significant role in diversifying Nanga's product line. Under his leadership, Nanga introduced its first down jackets in 2002, launching the iconic Aurora Down Jacket by 2003. "Insulation and heat retention are our focus, and we have very strong confidence in our performance," Mr. Yokota remarks,



highlighting the company's dedication to quality. Nanga's first retail store, "NANGA SHOP TOKYO,"

opened in 2015, marking the beginning of a successful retail expansion across Japan. By 2018, the company had entered the Asian market, and in 2021, Nanga established the Nanga Mountain Laboratory (NML), reinforcing its commitment to research and innovation. The NML conducts advanced research to improve down products' thermal performance and comfort, re-examining material composition and product structures to ensure top-quality output. "Our company's concept is to provide the world's best and warmest down products," says Mr. Yokota, emphasizing the rigorous testing and development processes that underpin Nanga's reputation.

Nanga's integrated approach, managing everything from planning to production and sales in-house, ensures consistent quality across its product range. This includes its renowned down jackets and sleeping bags, and the "GOOD SLEEPING" comforter line, which revisits the company's origins in bedding. The brand's sleeping bags are particularly celebrated for their ability to withstand extreme conditions, earning accolades both domestically and internationally. The company has gained recognition not only in the outdoor scene, but more recently in the wider fashion scene as well. Nanga's journey from a small sewing company to a global outdoor brand underscores its enduring commitment to quality, innovation and tradition.



**"Our company's concept is to provide the world's best and warmest down products."**

**Tomoyuki Yokota**

PRESIDENT OF NANGA





# FOR THE SMILES OF *All the Children of the Earth*

**Takahiko Takaura**

PRESIDENT

<https://marutaka-iryoo.com>

online shop



CHILDREN'S SMILES MAKE US ADULTS HAPPY, AND THAT DESIRE IS THE STARTING POINT FOR MARUTAKA IRYO'S BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY.

**M**

ARUTAKA IRYO, led by President Takahiko Takaura, is adapting to Japan's changing demographic and market dynamics. With a declining population and increasing societal disparities, Mr. Takaura emphasizes the importance of basic marketing principles and leveraging digitalization for sustainable growth.

"By 2050, more than 700 municipalities may no longer exist in Japan. We cannot stick to the market share principle," Mr. Takaura states. He underscores the necessity of analyzing market demands using advanced AI technologies and digital tools. This ensures the company meets core demands efficiently.

Sustainability is a cornerstone of MARUTAKA IRYO's business model. The company plans to establish shops for recycled products, offering durable and affordable clothing tailored to different communities. Addressing economic disparity, this initiative aims to create a recycling-oriented society.

The company's focus on quality and longevity is reflected in its product design and manufacturing processes. Mr. Takaura highlights the use of traditional Japanese textiles and innovative weaving techniques, such as *Banshu-ori*, to create high-quality, durable clothing. "Many of Daddy Oh Daddy's products are made in Japan, utilizing traditional weaving styles," he notes.

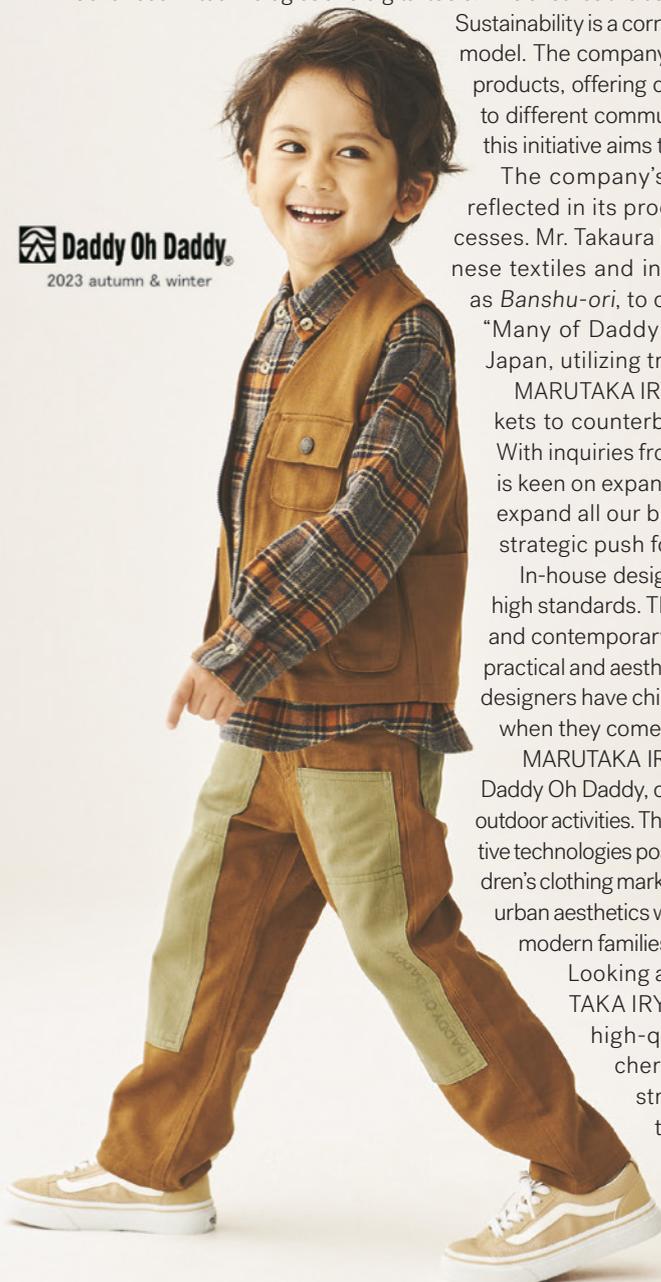
MARUTAKA IRYO is also exploring international markets to counterbalance shrinking domestic markets. With inquiries from Mongolia and Taiwan, the company is keen on expanding its brands overseas. "We want to expand all our brands," Mr. Takaura says, indicating a strategic push for international growth.

In-house designers play a crucial role in maintaining high standards. They prioritize children's comfort, safety, and contemporary trends, ensuring the clothes are both practical and aesthetically appealing. "Most of our in-house designers have children, so they think about their children when they come up with ideas," the president shares.

MARUTAKA IRYO's brands, including Moujonjon and Daddy Oh Daddy, cater to various needs, from urban use to outdoor activities. The integration of unique textiles and innovative technologies positions these brands as leaders in the children's clothing market. Daddy Oh Daddy, for instance, blends urban aesthetics with practical outdoor styles, appealing to modern families seeking versatile clothing options.

Looking ahead, Mr. Takaura envisions MARUTAKA IRYO continuing its legacy of producing high-quality, reasonably priced products cherished by consumers worldwide. His strategic vision and commitment to sustainability and innovation are set to guide the company through future challenges and opportunities.

**Daddy Oh Daddy**  
2023 autumn & winter



# Sewing Success: Maruhisa's Journey from Tradition to Trend

With roots dating back to 1900, Maruhisa specializes in producing high-quality clothing, blending traditional craftsmanship with modern innovation to cater to global markets.

Japan has a strong tradition of high-quality manufacturing, and nowhere is this truer than in the clothing industry. Traditional clothing is an embodiment of the craftsmanship that marks Japanese manufacturers, and one of the companies keeping this skill alive in a modern context is Maruhisa.

Upon its founding in 1900, the company focused on the production of high-quality *tabi* socks before expanding into the underwear sector. Fifth-generation president Kiminobu Hiraishi oversaw Maruhisa's movement into the outerwear market, and

the company swiftly became the chief supplier of clothing to Japanese retail giant Ito-Yokado.

Key to this success has been Maruhisa's dedication to establishing its own production lines as opposed to outsourcing. This allows the company to ensure the quality of its products remains optimum, sourcing the highest-quality materials and functioning as an integrated manufacturer that handles design, fabric production, sewing and sales. This expertise covers clothing for babies, children, men and women. Even for inexpensive products, Maruhisa does not reduce its

quality, but instead narrows down the elements used to those that are strictly necessary.

Underlying this manufacturing prowess is Maruhisa's commitment to market research and insights. Mr. Hiraishi explains that dedicated teams handle the different categories of clothing, and merchandisers will research international fashion trends. "This approach has allowed us to always focus on supplying the appropriate product at the appropriate time. It is always based on the needs of the customers," he adds.

The company's growth as a specialized manufacturer of cut and sew products has enabled it to expand into Thailand, China and Bangladesh. In the latter, Maruhisa's factory takes care of knitting, dyeing, printing, processing and sewing, and Mr. Hiraishi points out the importance of working closely with local partners to ensure quality remains high. As he says: "We consider partners not only as vital to our business,



"We consider partners not only as vital to our business, but as our equals in terms of the quality they can provide."

Kiminobu Hiraishi, President, Maruhisa Co., Ltd.



[www.maruhisa.co.jp/en](http://www.maruhisa.co.jp/en)

but as our equals in terms of the quality they can provide."

Maruhisa aims to establish distribution networks in the U.S. and Europe, and the company is keen to further expand its network in these two regions with distributors who understand the local markets.



Maruhisa Pacific Co., Ltd.



Machinery in the factory



# Shinnihonseiyaku: Pursuing Simplicity and Living Better



"Shifting demographics, particularly the aging population in Japan, have significantly altered the demand for cosmetics."

**Takahiro Goto,**  
President & CEO,  
Shinnihonseiyaku Co., Ltd.

As the Japanese beauty and healthcare industry booms, Shinnihonseiyaku Co., Ltd. stands as a vanguard of innovation, exploring the complex interplay of demographics, cultural nuances, and environmental consciousness. Led by the visionary perspective of President and CEO Takahiro Goto, the company is not merely crafting cosmetics, health foods, and pharmaceuticals, it is sculpting a narrative that transcends borders and generations.

**Embracing Change in a Shifting Demographic Landscape**  
One of the most serious prob-

**Mr. Takahiro Goto, President and CEO of Shinnihonseiyaku, discusses the current state of the beauty industry in Japan from the perspectives of simplicity and innovation, as well as shifting demographics and global strategies in the area of beauty and health.**

lems facing Japan is an aging population coupled with a low birth rate, which is the root of significant disruption—both in terms of challenges and opportunities—within various industries, particularly the cosmetics sector.

"Many firms within various industries share similar concerns stemming from these demographic changes," says Mr. Goto, whose business has been an exceptionally pivotal player in the cosmetics sector. The company has navigated the changing landscape by redirecting its focus from the domestic market to global arenas.

"Shifting demographics, particularly the aging population in Japan, have significantly altered the demand for cosmetics. The domestic market now calls for simpler and more basic cosmetic products. Over the next two decades, we can expect a growing population in their 60s, 70s and 80s. And with each generation, we anticipate the emergence of new beauty concepts."

Going forward, products catering to older consumers must have simplicity and functionality, affirms Mr. Goto.

"Ninety percent of our sales are generated through mail order, both online mainly by e-commerce and offline primarily over the phone," says Mr. Goto. "Furthermore, 70 percent of our customer base falls within the



Perfect One Series  
for simple skincare

over-60 age group, a market segment that we have an advantage in serving and one that will grow significantly in the future. Understanding and steadily catering to the needs of these senior generations would be an important business strategy for us."

The company has also designed a business model targeted at younger generations, emphasizing simple and all-in-one cosmetics. "While we already enjoy substantial support from the middle-senior segment, there is an opportunity for us to further penetrate the younger generation market. This approach will enable a smooth transition from younger consumers to the senior and middle-aged segments through our all-in-one cosmetic products," says Mr. Goto.

## Environmental Sustainability: Clean Beauty Initiatives

Clean Beauty in Japan refers to a growing movement within the global beauty and cosmetics industry that emphasizes sustainability, natural ingredients, and environmental consciousness. The trend reflects a shift in consumer preferences towards products that are not only effective but also eco-friendly and ethically sourced, with consumers increasingly looking for cosmetics that contain botanical extracts, plant-based oils, and other naturally derived components, avoiding synthetic and

potentially harmful substances. Clean Beauty also places a strong emphasis on reducing the environmental impact of product packaging.

Brands today adopt eco-friendly packaging materials, minimizing excess packaging, and promoting recycling practices. These include sustainability initiatives, transparent labeling, compliance with a comprehensive wellness approach, and consumer education. As consumers become more environmentally conscious and socially aware, the Clean Beauty trend is likely to continue evolving, influencing product development, marketing strategies, and consumer choices in the Japanese beauty and cosmetics market.

Amid the industry's widespread use of petroleum derivatives in cosmetics, Mr. Goto highlights the company's commitment to environmental sustainability. "We recognize the importance of reducing our environmental impact by transitioning from petroleum-based ingredients to plant-based alternatives," Mr. Goto asserts. "As part of our initiatives for petroleum-derived raw materials, we are working within the industry to replace them with biomass naphtha."

## Global Expansion and Marketing Strategies: The J-Beauty Advantage

As the Japanese cosmetics



W no Kenko Aojiru (Doubly Healthy Green Drink), a highly functional food product

industry experiences a significant shift toward international markets, Mr. Goto admirably acknowledges the effectiveness of the global strategy of K-Beauty (the universally popular beauty and cosmetics trends exported by South Korea). In doing so, he recognizes the need for Japanese companies to refine their strategies for exporting culture and products, articulating the fundamental distinction between J-Beauty and K-Beauty—simplicity versus complexity in skincare.

"I greatly admire and recognize the effectiveness of K-Beauty. K-Beauty is a wonderful approach where they initially export their culture, and then the beauty industry follows suit. This can be seen as a national approach to global marketing. In contrast, the Japanese gaming industry, represented by iconic characters like Mario and Pokémon, enjoys global recognition. However, globally active local marketers often take the lead in penetrating markets for these products. In other words, Japanese individuals and companies need to learn more about effective strategies for exporting their culture and products."

The Shinnihonseiyaku CEO sees this as an exciting opportunity for cultural export, leveraging Japan's domestic processing technology and manufacturing capabilities. "There is indeed a significant export opportunity for Japanese companies," he affirms. The company's current marketing strategy, focused on the middle-senior age group, will expand in regions such as North America.

### Challenges and Adaptation: Tailoring Products for Diverse Markets

Mr. Goto stresses that Shinnihonseiyaku's current challenge is to adapt its products to diverse geographic regions, creating products tailored to each region and localizing them in the future.

"We are fully aware that the skincare needs in North America and Europe differ significantly from those in Asian markets due to variations in skin composition and climate conditions," says Mr. Goto. "Skin texture and local climate are critical factors



Shinnihonseiyaku is No. 1 in the world in terms of sales share of the facial moisturizing gel market

to consider. For instance, Japan experiences high humidity during the rainy season, which impacts skincare. To meet these unique needs, we believe it will be important in the future to develop and localize products for each region while using the same brand. Our company takes a market-in approach, not a product-out approach. In other words, we understand the specific skincare needs of each region and incorporate these insights into our product development. For instance, our product 'Perfect One' will retain the brand name and continue to uphold the concept of providing simple skincare. Simultaneously, we make sincere efforts to cater to the distinct requirements of each market."



### Revolutionizing Beauty: Shikon Extract from the Medicinal Plant Murasaki

After years of research, Shinnihonseiyaku has developed a raw material from shikon extract, which is known for its healing properties. The company's mission to harness its active ingredient has resulted

in a recent breakthrough: Murasaki fermented collagen. This achievement, a result of collaborative research with Hiroshima University, exemplifies the company's commitment to innovation and the integration of traditional knowledge with modern technology.

"This research traces back to 2006 when the Murasaki plant was endangered, and even finding farmers cultivating it became very difficult," explains Mr. Goto. "Traditionally, this plant has been valued for its ability to heal wounds. Recognizing the efficacy of the Murasaki plant in wound healing, our company has made it a mission to revive its cultivation and harness its active ingredient for various applications, including cosmetics,

haircare and aging care. Over the years, through dedicated research and development efforts, we have successfully established a method for cultivating the Murasaki plant and extracting shikon from its roots."

The company's commitment to such open innovation is evident in its partnerships with

academic institutions and businesses. "We want to promote open innovation in our research and development efforts," states Mr. Goto.

### Health Initiatives: Cosmetics and Healthcare for Well-Being

Mr. Goto also delves into the unique intersection of cosmetics and healthcare within the country. As Japan grapples with an overburdened healthcare system, the shift from treatment to prevention is a major opportunity for manufacturers. Therefore, he is looking into the use of highly functional foods and medicines to prevent health problems associated with aging.

"We aim to contribute to creating a cycle of prevention by offering health foods and highly functional foods," says Mr. Goto. "The simplicity of Japanese beauty routines also presents a significant opportunity on a global scale."

### Presidential Vision: Shaping the Legacy for Future Generations

In a glimpse into the future, Mr. Goto reflects on his dream of attending the company's 100th anniversary ceremony. His goal is to lay the foundation for overseas expansion in the health and beauty sectors before stepping down from the presidency. The vision extends beyond personal achievement, with a desire to see Shinnihonseiyaku products being used globally: "When I do attend the 100th anniversary ceremony, I hope to see our products being used worldwide," he says.

As Shinnihonseiyaku continues to shape the beauty and wellness landscape, it stands as a testament to innovation, sustainability, and a commitment to global excellence under the visionary leadership of Takahiro Goto. The journey towards the future of beauty is painted with the strokes of simplicity, environmental consciousness, and a dedication to well-being.

# J-Beauty: DHC's Global Mission to Enhance Well-being

DHC Corporation, a leading Japanese skincare and wellness company, excels in meticulous product development and strategic international expansion, emphasizing natural ingredients and preventive healthcare to enhance global consumer well-being.



"Our meticulous nature and precision-based skills define Japan's national character and are evident in our beauty industry."

Midori Miyazaki, President, DHC Corporation

DHC Corporation, founded in Japan, is renowned for its meticulous approach to beauty and wellness. As one of the leading players in the Japanese cosmetics industry (J-Beauty), DHC has made significant strides in skincare, health supplements and beyond.

Midori Miyazaki, president of DHC, acknowledges the competition from South Korea's K-Beauty, driven by the popularity of Korean culture, but emphasizes the unique strengths of Japanese brands.

"The strengths of Korean brands are also the strengths of Japanese brands. Our meticulous nature and precision-based skills define Japan's national character and are evident in our beauty industry," she explains.

While the Korean market is noted for its dynamism, Ms. Miyazaki believes Japan's maturity and technological prowess make it an unshakable force in the industry.

Today, DHC's international footprint spans over 20 countries, with a strong emphasis on the Asian market. Ms. Miyazaki notes the challenges faced in different regions, such as Europe, where skincare needs differ due to variations in climate and skin types. "We have incorporated in the U.S., China and Taiwan, and growth is accelerating, particularly in Vietnam," she shares. This targeted expansion strategy highlights DHC's adaptability and focus on regions where their products resonate most.



DHC Protein Diet

One of DHC's flagship products, Deep Cleansing Oil, has garnered multiple awards and widespread acclaim. Ms. Miyazaki attributes its success to the use of 100% natural ingredients, particularly organic olive oil from Spain. "The key to beautiful skin lies in practicing daily care and minimizing skin irritation. Our Deep Cleansing Oil reduces cleansing time and facial stimulation, making it superior to conventional products," she explains.

Japan's demographic challenges, with an aging population, have spurred growth in the anti-aging cosmetics sector, and DHC has strategically positioned itself to cater to this market through both cosmetics and supplements.

"We focus on delaying the aging process with supplements that customers can start



DHC "SubeSube" set

taking in their twenties and that also benefit them in their later years," Ms. Miyazaki states. This proactive approach seeks to build long-term habits that promote longevity and wellness.

As for health supplements—a staple of the growing anti-aging product market—DHC aims to make them more appealing without compromising on their nutritional value. Ms. Miyazaki emphasizes that the company's strategy is not about following trends but establishing sustainable habits. "We focus on making capsules easy to consume and reducing the amount needed per intake. Our Protein Diet Series, with diverse flavors, ensures that people experience continuity without the boredom," she notes.

In December 2023, DHC launched Naturiza E, a supplement designed to address circulation issues and stiffness. Ms. Miyazaki explains the broader approach behind this product, highlighting the company's commitment to preventive healthcare: "Naturiza E supports customers struggling with various ailments, while our Equol supple-

ment, based on soy isoflavones, aids women in middle age."

DHC's recent acquisition by the ORIX Group has created new domestic opportunities, and the company is actively seeking overseas partnerships.

However, despite its global ambitions, DHC remains firmly grounded in its core values. "We balance quality and price, aiming to become an integral part of people's daily routines worldwide," Ms. Miyazaki concludes.



DHC Olive Virgin Oil

With a focus on promoting longevity, wellness and health, DHC continues to thrive as a leader in the beauty and wellness industry, dedicated to enhancing the happiness and well-being of its customers.

Elevating Happiness Every Day

DHC

www.dhccare.com



Various DHC products

# HEALTH INNOVATION: *Naturally Plus Gets Trends*

NATURALLY PLUS IS MAKING WAVES IN GLOBAL MARKETS WITH ITS INNOVATIVE HEALTH SOLUTIONS, PARTICULARLY THROUGH ITS LEADING HYDROGEN WATER BRAND, IZUMIO.

**E**stablished in 1999, Naturally Plus has expanded under the “Made in Japan” label with high quality products like IZUMIO. This hydrogen-infused beverage showcases the company’s dedication to scientific innovation and consumer health, offering one of the highest concentrations of hydrogen in the world. In Japan alone, Naturally Plus has sold over 300 million pouches, and continues to be the number one hydrogen-

infused beverage in Japan. Company president and CEO Takashi Tajima notes: “By building on the trusted reputation of Japanese craftsmanship, we have successfully expanded throughout East and Southeast Asia.” Despite initial skepticism on entering the U.S. market, Naturally Plus launched there in 2014. The acceptance of IZUMIO there proved its universal appeal.

The company’s commitment extends beyond product sales to a philosophy of health and well-



**“We build on the trusted reputation of Japanese craftsmanship.”**

**Takashi Tajima**  
PRESIDENT & CEO, NATURALLY PLUS

ness. Mr. Tajima explains: “One of the attractions of hydrogen-infused water is its ability to reduce oxidation back to its original state.” Combining rigorous scientific research with practical health benefits, the company’s methodical approach and product claims are evidenced in the significant study on natural medicine and the antioxidative benefits of hydrogen.

Naturally Plus not only innovates but also educates, ensuring hydrogen-infused water is understood and effectively used worldwide, supporting a lifestyle of health that resonates globally.



Japan's No.1 Best Seller

Hydrogen dissolution ratio 3.3 ppm\*\*

\*Hydrogenated water market in Japan (excluding generation equipment and supplement): No. 1 Brand By Sales Amount, 2010-2022. Market share estimated from available public data plus fieldwork interviews by Ipsos Japan, August 2023.

\*\*Average reading at point of filling.



**Naturally Plus®**

[www.naturally-plus.com/gl/en](http://www.naturally-plus.com/gl/en)

# CATHY CHEMICAL INDUSTRY: *Pioneers in Skincare*

THE JAPANESE SKINCARE COMPANY IS PIONEERING THE COSMETICS INDUSTRY, OFFERING PERSONALIZED SOLUTIONS WITH ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.

**E**stablished in 1952, Japanese skincare company Cathy Chemical Industry is at the forefront of the cosmetics sector, creating innovative solutions with unique ingredients.

The company’s flagship skincare line, Plaskin, launched in 1964 and features products addressing various needs, from cleansing to moisturizing, with a focus on maintaining skin moisture.

The secret to Plaskin’s success is in the ingredients, containing bovine-type placenta material. Company president Hiroyuki Harada explains the benefits of the material: “Placenta contains many active ingredients like amino acids and peptides with effects such as activating the metabolism of a user or the whitening and rejuvenation of the skin.”

The company’s sensitive skin brand, ATP—which was conceived 35 years ago by Ikuo Nishitani, director and general manager of the Development Division—consists of products containing beefsteak plant extract, an anti-inflammatory ingredient that blocks histamines. Mr. Nishitani discusses how the integration of the extract came about due to his daughter’s struggle with atopic dermatitis. He notes: “I applied a beefsteak plant on her skin and what I experienced was amazing, her condition really improved.”

Cathy Chemical Industry’s products are available in the United States and all over Asia, with the company looking to expand its reach particularly in Southeast Asia.



**“We offer skincare solutions to improve lives.”**

**Hiroyuki Harada**  
PRESIDENT, CATHY CHEMICAL INDUSTRY



香椎化粧品

<https://cathy.co.jp>

Cathy website QR>



LIOVERITE

<https://lioverite.com>

Lioverite website QR>



# From Chemistry to Consumer: MP Gokyo's Trailblazing Solutions for Global Industries

A leading Japanese chemical firm pioneers high-quality, sustainable products like GLYLOID and TAMAVISCO, leveraging reliability and expertise to address global market demands, particularly in the semiconductor and conscious beauty sectors.



"The biggest focus for 2027 will be our overseas growth as well as our expansion in raw materials for the semiconductor market."

Hidemitsu Wakita,  
President, MP Gokyo  
Food & Chemical Co., Ltd.

Amidst the backdrop of a depreciated yen and changing global dynamics, MP Gokyo Food & Chemical is carving a path of innovation



(L-R): Tamarind seed, tamarind kernel powder and purified tamarind seed gum

and reliability, especially through its unique products GLYLOID and TAMAVISCO. Company president Hidemitsu Wakita emphasizes this as being an opportune moment for Japanese manufacturers to showcase their quality and credibility.

"The weak yen has created a situation where the high quality, credibility and unique characteristics of Japanese products have been allowed to shine through," Mr. Wakita says, as he highlights the advantages for MP Gokyo in international markets.

"Our strategy revolves around letting the customers see the value we provide in our high-quality specialty products as well as our stable supply, rather than competing with cheap products in the market."

As Japan faces demographic challenges, MP Gokyo also sees an opportunity in catering to the aging population, both domestically and overseas. In the domestic

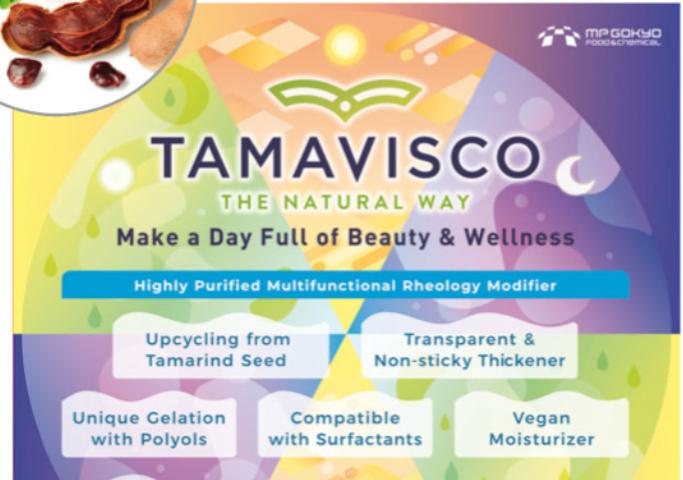


(L-R): GLYLOID 2A and GLYLOID 3S for food; TAMAVISCO for cosmetics



market, it supplies polysaccharides as thickening agents for dysphagia and nursing

"A key strength is that GLYLOID doesn't have a slimy texture like other hydrocolloids," the president explains. "For emulsifications, dressings and sauces, it is being increasingly



Key visual of TAMAVISCO promotion in 2024

care, for example, aiding elderly individuals with swallowing difficulties. This not only benefits society but also enhances the company's expertise, enabling it to expand globally to serve overseas communities.

Discussing industry forecasts, Mr. Wakita acknowledges the complexities of the chemical market post-COVID-19. However, he remains optimistic about growth prospects, particularly in the food and cosmetics sectors.

"For the mid and long term, the clean label trend has already started and will go on," he notes, underscoring the company's commitment to sustainable and nature-based solutions.

Central to MP Gokyo's success are its flagship products, GLYLOID and TAMAVISCO, derived from tamarind seed. GLYLOID's versatility in food applications, replacing traditional ingredients without compromising quality, has garnered attention both in Japan and elsewhere.

"GLYLOID can make sauce and dressings adhere to the food and coat it with a honey-like texture," Mr. Wakita says, illustrating its unique sensory rheological properties.

used in North America as an alternative and better solution."

In addition to sauce and dressings, he also mentions that GLYLOID can partially replace locust bean gum to achieve slower melting of frozen desserts.

Turning to the cosmetics industry, TAMAVISCO embodies the concept of conscious beauty, offering natural and sustainable alternatives. With certifications from reputable organizations, TAMAVISCO aligns with global trends towards ethical and eco-friendly beauty products.

Looking ahead, the company has a clear international expansion strategy, targeting North America, Europe and ASEAN markets. With a vision set for 2030, the company aims to be at the forefront of global innovation, particularly in environmentally friendly materials.

By 2027, the president envisions MP Gokyo making significant strides in overseas expansion and electronic materials, with a steadfast commitment to sustainability.



GLYLOID 2A and GLYLOID 3S showcased at Fi Asia 2023, Thailand



www.mpgfc.co.jp/en



"With fierce competition, brands must focus resources on sales rather than development."

Yoshihide Kanzaki,  
President, TOA Inc.



Conference room in the new headquarters

# Embracing Change with Over a Century of Outsourcing Excellence

**As TOA embarks on a new journey with a fresh name, there is a renewed focus on comprehensive outsourcing and sustainable growth for the global cosmetics industry.**

TOA, previously known as Nihon Kolmar, is entering a new chapter with a rebranding that underscores its commitment to innovation and client partnership. Founded in 1912 under the name 'Kinryoen,' the company originally bore the name of a famous sake brand, reflecting its deep-rooted heritage. This year marks the company's 112th anniversary and the rebrand comes at a particularly strategic time.

"TOA stands for 'Total Outsourcing Access,'" company president Yoshihide Kanzaki clarifies.

This new name is more than a mere rebranding, though, as it encapsulates the company's mission to provide comprehensive outsourcing solutions while

maintaining strong and accessible partnerships with clients.

"In Japan, the competition in the cosmetics industry has been intensifying, and the OEM/ODM market has been growing," the president says. "We have been reaffirming that our mission is to keep providing high-quality and diverse products, and the new name is a reflection of this."

It is fair to say that the company's journey has been one of resilience and adaptation. After its factory in Osaka was destroyed during World War II, what is now TOA pivoted from operating under its own brand to focusing exclusively on OEM/ODM operations. A significant milestone in this was the licensing agreement with

Kolmar Laboratories in 1968, which lasted until TOA gained its own technological prowess and independence around 2000.

As the company now looks forward, the name change aligns with a broader cultural and operational shift within TOA.

"We thought that this would be the perfect time to change the company name," Mr. Kanzaki says, tying it neatly to a move to a new headquarters and a refreshed corporate identity. And despite the inevitable challenges of such a transition, TOA remains focused on preserving its core values.

TOA's philosophy of not competing against its clients remains a cornerstone of its business ethos, something that will always remain. This commitment is crucial in the evolving landscape of the industry, where sustainability and demographic shifts are driving new global market dynamics.

The company is poised to leverage its deep experience and robust capabilities to meet the growing demand for OEM/ODM solutions, particularly as new entries and startups proliferate. Mr. Kanzaki reflected on his four-decade tenure at the company, during which both

sales and the workforce have grown tenfold, and acknowledged the foundational work laid by previous leaders.

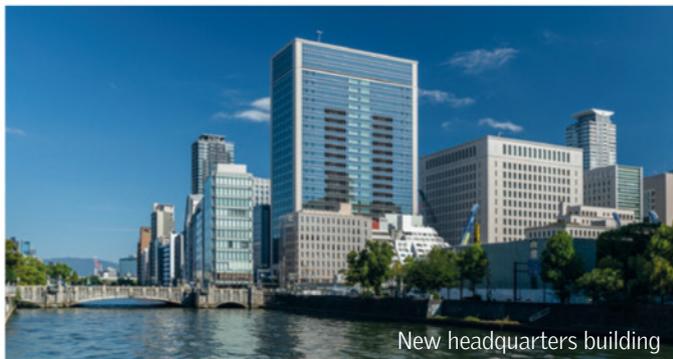
"There is no doubt in my mind that past generations of our company have contributed greatly to getting us into the position we are in today," he said.

The new corporate culture Mr. Kanzaki envisions is one that fosters proactive decision-making at all levels.

"Rather than a top-down approach, we would like to build a system and corporate culture that encourages each employee to think and act proactively to make a decision and take on challenges."

And with regard to the president's legacy, the idea is very much based on the phrase, 'the customer is always right.'

"We would like to strengthen the attitude of 'speaking out' to our clients in order to build a robust relationship with each of them," he says. "We believe this mindset will be very beneficial for both our clients and ourselves."



New headquarters building

**TOA**  
www.toa-cosme.co.jp





PARTING SHOT

# Lupita Nyong'o

**▶** THE TRAILER FOR *A QUIET PLACE: DAY ONE* (JUNE 28) SHOWS STAR LUPITA Nyong'o carrying a cat around moments before New York City is overtaken by aliens. For Nyong'o, the scariest thing on set weren't the aliens, but rather the cat in her arm. "I had a deadly fear of cats. I couldn't be in the same room as cats. I would break out in tears." Calling herself a "scaredy cat," the Oscar-winning actress worked with a cat therapist to get over her fear. "I can confidently say this film has changed my life." The film, a spin-off prequel to the other two in the franchise, tells the story of the first day the aliens—drawn by noise—took over the world. Nyong'o calls New York "a character in and of itself" and "makes for a much more dexterous journey, I will say, compared to the last few films that were in a remote location." As to how she'd fare in a world infested with noise-attracted aliens? "Not well, because when I am deathly afraid, I break out in fits of laughter. Which is the wrong thing to be doing when you're scared, ever. So, I feel like I would die laughing, which is great."

**How excited are you to be in this franchise?**

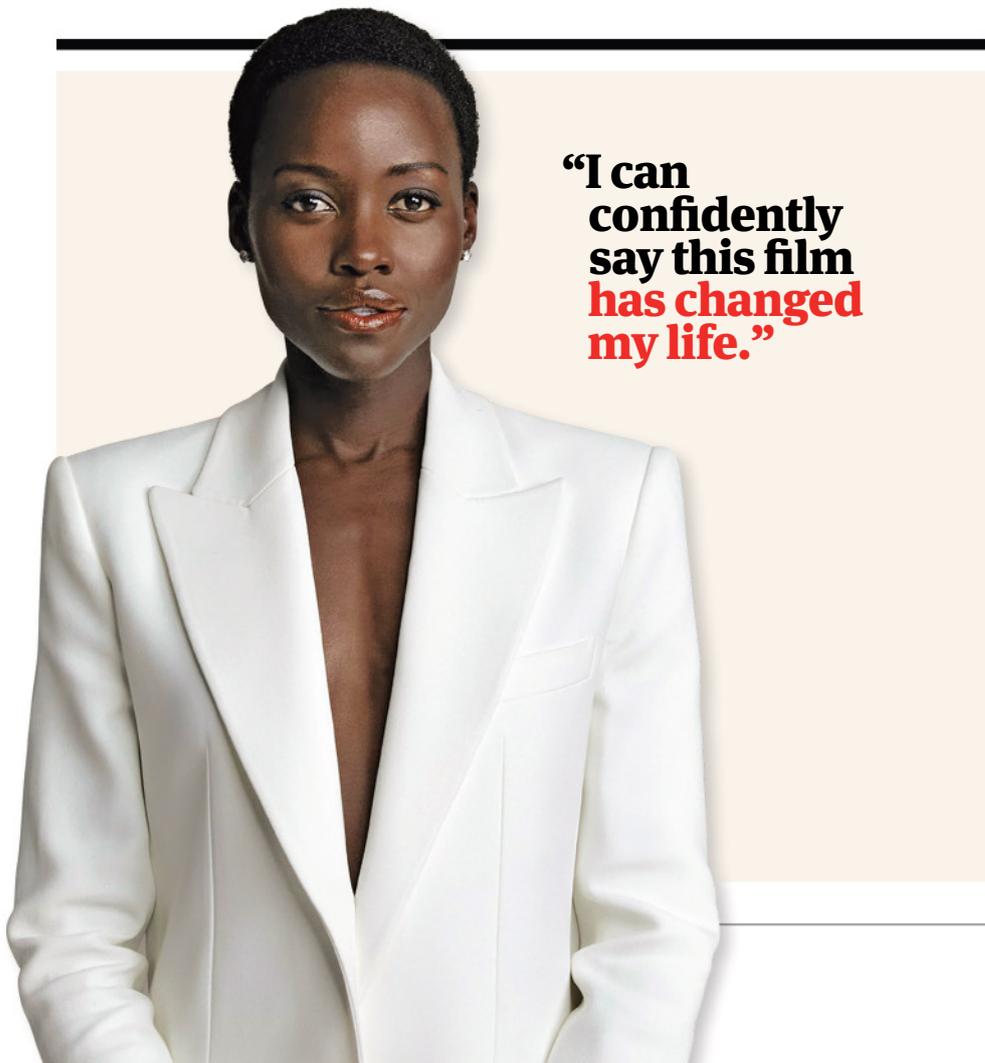
Really excited. When I got the call from John [Krasinski], I felt really honored, first of all, and because I think what he's created is really special and powerful and fun. The idea of taking the baton from him and Emily [Blunt], obviously that's a big responsibility, but I liked that he wanted to do something different with the universe he created. He's really interested in pushing the boundaries about what horror can do. I love the innovation that he brought to this well-loved genre.

**What about this genre excited you?**

What I do love about this genre is that there's two emotions that really bring people together in entertainment, obviously, laughter, and fear. I think those two emotions are such great cinematic experiences. And horror, of course, lends itself to fear. It's cathartic. So in the realm of entertainment, we get to exercise that part of ourselves that lies dormant, if we're lucky, in our real lives.

**How did you beat your fear of cats?**

When I read the script, I fell in love with Sam, and I so badly wanted to do it, but the cat. I had to go to cat therapy. By the time production came along, I was somewhat comfortable. But it was a big arc to get to a place where by the end of the film, I was madly in love with the cats. I didn't want to let them go. And now I have a cat. —*H. Alan Scott*



**"I can confidently say this film has changed my life."**

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