

# WINDS FROM JAPAN

The Licensing Executives Society Japan

## LES Japan Events Celebrating Our 50th Year Anniversary

By Yasuo Fujii, Ph.D.\*

### 1. Annual Conference 2022

LES Japan (LESJ) held its Annual Conference on July 8th and 9th, 2022 in Otsu city, Shiga prefecture. The Conference this year was very special and memorable in terms of celebrating our 50th Year Anniversary and, in addition, the first "in-person" annual conference in about three years since the pandemic began.

While there was an in-person and online option for attendance, 90% of participants chose the "in-person" option, which revealed that the "in-person" Annual Conference was the long-awaited event for the LESJ members.

Consequently, many members gathered together in the venue from all over Japan and enjoyed face-to-face communication, where the Conference (except for the Banquet and After-Party) were shared with online participants.

### Excursions

The venue for the Conference was located on the shores of Lake Biwa, the largest lake in Japan, which supplies fresh water to the Kansai area (including Kyoto and Osaka). Before the Conference started, in the morning on July 8th, two excursions were held in parallel near the venue.

The Golf Competition was held at Seta Golf Course, one of the famous courses in Japan. It is a strategically demanding course and the participants enjoyed the challenge.



The tour in well-preserved historical townscape in Omi Hachiman city, designated as an important preservation district in Japan, was also held. The participants enjoyed strolling along the old residences of well-known "Omi Merchants" who expanded their business all over Japan since Edo period (1603-1868).

### Opening Ceremony



Ms. Tomomi Fujita, Vice-President

The Conference under the theme of "Pioneering with Intellectual Property! Future of Sustainable Development" started with opening remarks by Ms. Tomomi Fujita, the Chair of organizing committee and Vice-President of LESJ, and then Mr. Kenichi Nagasawa, President of LESJ, declared the Conference open.



Mr. Kenichi Nagasawa, President

## Keynote Speech

Ms. Yukiko Kada, a member of the House of Councilors and past Governor of Shiga prefecture, delivered the Keynote Speech introducing her work for conservation of the environment, especially regarding Lake Biwa. She emphasized the importance of coexistence of people and rich nature for developing sustainable society.



Ms. Yukiko Kada

## Speech 1

Mr. Toshimitsu Arai, past Commissioner of the Japan Patent Office, delivered next speech referring to recent problems in industries and IP field including economic security, and expressing his expectation for IP professionals' contribution to strengthen the competitive power of Japanese industries.



Mr. Toshimitsu Arai

## Speech 2

Mr. Masahito Yamamoto, CEO of TANEYA Co., Ltd. having headquarters in Omi Hachiman city near the venue, delivered the final Speech introducing the history of his company, started by his forefather in 1872. He explained his company's philosophy in keeping tradition but to also keep challenging themselves, referring to the well-known Omi Merchants' philosophy of a "triple-win", which means that the business should be good for the seller, the buyer and the society.



Mr. Masahito Yamamoto

## Banquet

After the thought-provoking Speeches, the Banquet started with an opening address by our President Mr. Kenichi Nagasawa, a congratulatory speech by Ms. Eri Nakajo, Vice-Governor of Shiga prefecture, followed by a toast to a drink by Mr. Ichiro Nakatomi, President of LES International (LESI).



Mr. Ichiro Nakatomi,  
President of LESI

Participants enjoyed stimulating conversations and a dinner course, including special local cuisine. Participants also enjoyed a performance by local musicians playing a special whistle made from a "reed" from a plant living at the edge of Lake Biwa. Participants were keen to hear from the player that he obtained a Japanese Patent for the "reed whistle."



During the Banquet, the awards ceremony was also held to give an award to Mr. Makoto Ogino, past President of LESJ, and Mr. Takashi Suzuki, past Vice-President of LESJ, for their distinguished contribution to LESJ.



Mr. Makoto Ogino,  
past President

## After-Party

Following the closing remarks of the Banquet by Ms. Chikako Hashimoto, President-Elect of LESJ, the After-Party was held until the late at night, where members further enjoyed friendly face-to-face communication in a casual atmosphere.



Ms. Chikako Hashimoto,  
President-Elect



## Concurrent Workshops

The second day of the Conference started in the morning on July 9th with the concurrent five Workshops on: (1) the latest IP issues in the U.S. organized by the U.S. Issue Working Group (WG); (2) co-creation especially in healthcare filed co-organized

by the Cooperation with Industry, Government and Academia WG and the Healthcare WG; (3) SEP licensing co-organized by the ICT Business WG and the Antimonopoly Act WG; (4) the recently revised Japan's Corporate Governance Code guidelines organized by the IP Finance WG; and (5) contribution of IP for enhancing a company's value organized by the Branding WG.



### Panel Discussion

Following the Workshop Sessions, the Panel Discussion was held under the theme of "IP and the Future of Business that Develops Sustainably", with three speakers: Mr. Yoshihiro Endo (Honda Motor Co., Ltd.); Mr. Kazushi Takemoto (Suntory Holdings Limited); and Mr. Toshiya Watanabe (The University of Tokyo), and a moderator, Mr. Hiroki Saito, the immediate past President of LESJ, where several issues, including how IP departments will change in line with business, especially focusing on utilization of data, were discussed.



### Closing Ceremony

In the closing ceremony of the Conference, the upcoming Special Symposium celebrating LESJ's 50th Year Anniversary was introduced to be held on September 2nd, 2022. Finally the Conference was closed with remarks by Mr. Yoshiyuki Iwai, Honorary Advisor of LESJ and past Commissioner of the Japan Patent Office, celebrating the success of the Conference and encouraging the members to open up the developing future with IP.

## 2. Round-Table Discussions

LES Japan held three special Round-Table Discussions, as part of the 50th Year Anniversary Events, in June and July, 2022.

### Chief Judges of the Intellectual Property High Court



The first Round-Table Discussion was held on June 13th, with the Chief Judge of the Intellectual Property High Court Mr. Otaka, and four past Chief Judges, Mr. Imura, Mr. Shitara, Mr. Shimizu and Ms. Takabe attending. The event was chaired by LESJ's President-Elect Ms. Chikako Hashimoto, and resulted in a meaningful and profound discussion on recent topics of IP.

### Commissioners of the Japan Patent Office



The second Round-Table Discussion was also held on June 13th, with the Commissioner of the Japan Patent Office Mr. Mori, and four past Commissioners, Mr. Iwai (our Honorary Advisor), Mr. Ito, Mr. Hato and Mr. Komiya. The event was chaired by LESJ's President, Mr. Kenichi Nagasawa, and resulted in a very useful and exciting discussion on the future of IP and innovation, including desirable directions of JPO. The discussion also encompassed creating an IP strategy given the many recent changes, including those regarding economic security. Mr. Ichiro Nakatomi, President of LES International, observed the roundtable discussion.

### Presidents of LES Japan



The third Round-Table Discussion by current and past Presidents of LESJ was held on July 15th. Mr. Chikao Fukuda (2002-2004), Mr. Junichi Yamazaki (2010-2012), Mr. Katsumi Harashima (2012-2014), Mr. Ichiro Nakatomi (2014-2016, current President of LES International), Ms. Junko Sugimura (2016-2018, current Vice-President of LES International), Mr. Makoto Ogino (2018-2020), Mr. Hiroki Saito (2020-2022), and Mr. Kenichi Nagasawa (current President) gathered together and enjoyed friendly discussion celebrating our 50th Year Anniversary. In the discussion, they looked back on the 50-year history of LES Japan, and talked about expectations for the younger members.

### 3. Memorial Symposium

The Memorial Symposium celebrating our 50th Year Anniversary was held on September 2nd, which will be reported soon!

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\* *Editor / Patent Attorney, Haruka Patent & Trademark Attorney*

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## Editors' Note

This issue includes an article "LES Japan Events Celebrating Our 50th Year Anniversary" by Mr. Yasuo Fujii.

Thank you for supporting "*WINDS from Japan.*" This newsletter will continue to provide you with useful information on activities at LES Japan and up-to-date information on IP and licensing activities in Japan.

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<https://www.lesj.org/en/winds/new.php>

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