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### **Third Annual Iowa/Yamanashi Young Professionals Conference Begins Feb. 17**

Iowa Sister States will host a delegation of young professionals from Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan to attend the third annual Iowa/Yamanashi Young Professionals Conference. The conference takes place from Friday, February 17 through Wednesday, February 22.

Participants in this conference will consist of representatives from Junior Chamber International Kofu, Iowa Sister States, the Greater Des Moines Young Professionals Connection, and Des Moines Junior Chamber International.

The Iowa/Yamanashi Young Professionals Conference was created to facilitate conversations between young professionals in Iowa and Japan. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss topics that are important to themselves and the future of their respective communities. These topics include: city management, gaining community involvement, and continuing care retirement centers.

The delegation will also operate a booth at the Blue Ribbon Bacon Festival ("Baconfest"). They hope to show Iowans a little bit about Yamanashi, Japan. They will feature a traditional Japanese game called *kendama* and samples of sake from Yamanashi Prefecture.

Yamanashi Prefecture and the State of Iowa have been sister states for over 50 years; it was the first relationship of its kind formed between the United States and Japan after World War II. The relationship began shortly after the "Iowa Hog Lift" in 1960, in which Iowa sent more than 30 hogs to Yamanashi after Japan faced significant damage from typhoons. It continues to be one of Iowa's most active sister state relationships.

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