

# NEWS Letter

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## JAFE Special Seminar Held

The Japan Association for Female Executives (JAFE) held a special seminar with Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Yasuhisa Shiozaki as the guest speaker. Despite his busy schedule with the Diet in session, Minister Shiozaki kindly found time to attend the seminar. He spoke on the theme of “Women and Social Security System Reform” and, in particular, explained the future direction of government policy in great detail. Afterwards, he welcomed questions from the audience and responded with elaborate answers.



## Excerpts from Minister Shiozaki's Address at the Seminar



### ◆ Current status of women in the workplace

Among the political appointees serving in the three level of leadership positions in the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, both of the two state ministers and one of the parliamentary vice-ministers are women. In addition, the post of administrative vice minister is being occupied by a woman and so is the post of special adviser to the minister. The percentage of women in managerial posts—i.e., directors and those with higher positions—in the ministry increased from 6.7% last year to 7.1% this year. In terms of the number of new hires, women account for 34.6 percent of those for “comprehensive service” positions, i.e., those tasked with non-clerical tasks.

As to the situation in the private sector, the so-called “M-curve” phenomenon, which refers to the M-shaped curve of the female labor force participation plotted according to age, somewhat weakened last year. However, the percentage of women in regular full-time employment is not on the rise. In line with the government's efforts to promote men's participation in childrearing and make household support services more accessible, the proposed law for the promotion of women's empowerment, currently deliberated at the Diet, would make it mandatory for large companies to develop plans for the empowerment of women at work.

### ◆ Social security system reform

The national health insurance program will be operated locally with prefectural governments taking over the responsibility for financial operations and other management tasks from the central government. By 2025, prefectural governments will set forth plans for the provision of medical care services within their respective regions, which will be complemented by community-wide comprehensive care systems to be developed by municipalities (cities, towns, and villages). All those measures are designed to establish a new mechanism under which prefectural governments will maintain the responsibility for the provision of medical services as well as for the management of the health insurance program for their residents, and thereby to address structural problems with the current national health insurance program.

### ◆ Japan Vision: Health Care 2035

This vision was established in order to rebuild Japan's health care system, not simply for the sake of reducing the burden of medical expenses and cutting back on health care benefits, but with aims to: improve the quality of health care services; realize a highly innovative system, for instance, by shifting to a medical fee system based on performance measured by relevant outcome indicators; and contribute to the nation's economic and fiscal management.

### ◆ Child poverty

Under the banner of a national movement to support the future of children initiated by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as part of his government's efforts to tackle child poverty, various measures are being undertaken by both the public and private sectors. These include the establishment of a system to provide one-stop support services for single-parent families. Also, the government is well aware of the need to revise the Child Welfare Act, which dates back to 1947.



Introduction of Members



**Ms. Masako Mori**

**Honorary Member of JAFE and  
Member of the House of Councillors**

In April 2015, Ms. Masako Mori was seated among the House and Senate members and listened as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered a historical address to a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress. She feels that the Japanese government's commitment to the empowerment of women, which has been defined as one of the core components of the growth strategy, is drawing a great deal of attention from politicians and economists from around the world. She places high expectations on JAFE members to take on greater roles, noting that women's power is needed to enable Japan to achieve fiscal stability and economic growth.



**Ms. Masae Yamanaka**

**Corporate Executive and VP&GM, Special Demand Development Division,  
Sales and Marketing Development Division, LIXIL Japan Company**

Ms. Masae Yamanaka did not give up and carried on working as a member of corporate sales staff at IBM Japan in those years when women were alienated in the male-dominated world of business. Subsequently, she left IBM Japan for a sales management job at Microsoft Japan, before joining LIXIL Corporation in July 2014. She assumed the current position in April 2015, tackling the task of sales management at the housing equipment manufacturer, a new field of business. Outside of her career, she is living a fulfilling life with her husband and their two-and-a-half-year-old son.

*Report*

**Special Event:**

**JAFE cherry blossom  
viewing seminar held**



On April 1, 2015, the cherry blossom viewing seminar was held at Tsunamachi Mitsui Club to enjoy a night view of cherry blossoms in full bloom, inviting highly successful JAFE members as guest speakers. The three speakers were: Ms. Haruno Yoshida, president of BT Japan who has been appointed as the first female vice chairman of Keidanren's Board of Councilors; Ms. Mitsue Kurihara who became the first internally promoted member of the Audit & Supervisory Board at the Development Bank of Japan; and Ms. Asako Hoshino, the first female senior vice president of Nissan Motor Corporation. Led by Ms. Yuriko Koike, a member of the House of Representatives, as the moderator, the three guest speakers shared their experiences before assuming their current posts as the first woman to do so.



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**Notice: Fourth JAFE Seminar**

**Guest speaker:** Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs

**Time and date:** Thursday, September 17, 2015

7:00 p.m. (Doors open at 6:00 p.m.)

**Venue:** Tokyo American Club, Manhattan III room

To Subscribe

<http://www.jafe.jp/seminar/150917.html>

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