

The background is a complex, layered composition. It features a map of California in the lower-left corner, rendered in a light blue color. Overlaid on this and the rest of the page is a network of thin, dark lines connecting small, dark circular nodes, creating a web-like pattern. The background is also composed of various overlapping geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, in shades of green, brown, and orange. The overall effect is a blend of geographical, technological, and abstract elements.

# CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FOUNDATION



As one of the largest economies in the world, California has long been a natural hub for international visitors and trade activity. Once part of the Wild West, our state now attracts the best and brightest innovators, investors and business leaders from all over the world, who come to take part in our diverse economy and experience our entrepreneurial spirit.

Like many other attractions within California, our state government also draws a multitude of international delegations throughout the year. The State Senate alone welcomes over 1000 international visitors annually, many of whom come to our region to engage in dialogue with lawmakers, and learn from them the responsibilities and challenges they face in managing the most populous and diverse state in the nation. As California is central to many large industries, such as high-tech, agriculture and entertainment that rely on fresh, innovative thinking and new capital, this dialogue and exchange of ideas with international partners is especially important and mutually beneficial. It has resulted in a multi-faceted society that has become one of our State's most defining features and, when taken along with our unique landscapes and diverse cultural and recreational offerings, makes it no surprise that so many important visitors come to the region throughout the year.

This booklet is an introduction to the California International Relations Foundation (CIRF), a non-profit cooperative effort between the California State Senate and a number of California's leading corporations. It is our goal to promote California's engagement with the world as a highly desirable trade partner and locus of informational resources and technology, with a government open to embracing partnership and change. We hope this booklet provides valuable insight into the many benefits California can receive from well-developed international civic, cultural and business relations.



Daniel Alvarez, Secretary of the Senate



## THE CALIFORNIA INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FOUNDATION

is a private non-profit public benefit corporation that has been organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Foundation provides aid to the California State Senate in furthering the exchange of economic, educational and cultural information between government leaders and other citizens of foreign countries and Members of the California Legislature and their constituencies.

Such exchanges include, but are not limited to, information relating to government, trade and commerce, agriculture, tourism, technology, education, environment issues and the arts. These individualized programs facilitate California's better understanding of other countries' political institutions, policy perspectives and business opportunities while simultaneously familiarizing officials from other nations with our own economic strengths and democratic principles including our representative system of government.

The Foundation provides for these exchanges by assisting the California State Senate to arrange and host substantive programs throughout the state for visiting international delegations. Programs include appointments with government and private sector officials relevant to a delegation's specific interest and agenda; visits to various locales showcasing California's unique characteristics; as well as social activities encouraging mutual cooperation through informal discussions and communications.

The Foundation is funded by private donations from businesses and individuals interested in forging stronger ties between California's government and business leaders and their international counterparts; strengthening California's economic role within the global arena; and furthering cultural and educational exchanges between California and other countries.

Under the Articles of Incorporation of this Foundation, its funds may only be expended in conjunction with meetings, activities, or events held within the State of California and attended by government leaders and citizens of foreign countries who are making official visits to the California State Senate.

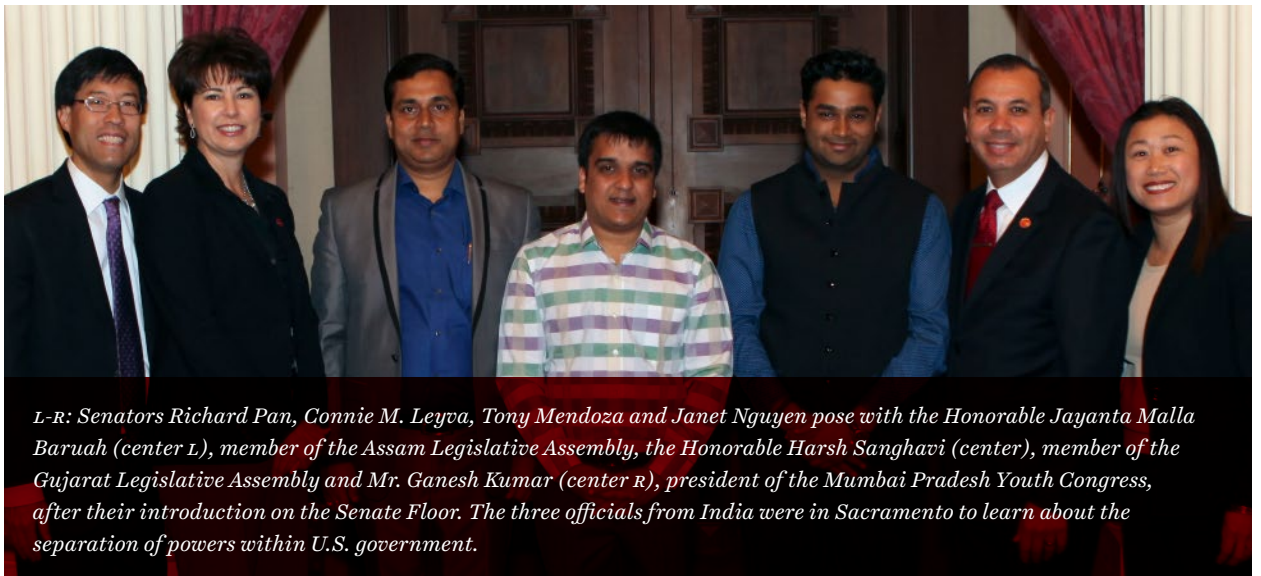
# BUILDING BRIDGES

The California International Relations Foundation works closely with state government, the private sector and educational institutions to build cooperation and understanding between California and the world's nations.

Among its many activities, the Foundation facilitates bringing foreign delegations to California in an effort to promote democratic principles and institutions, share information and technology, as well as to enhance California's competitive position in the global marketplace.



*A delegation from the Kiambu County Assembly in Kenya meets with Assistant Secretary of the Senate Bernadette McNulty (front L). Kenya is implementing a new decentralized system of governance and the purpose of the delegation's program in California was to learn about California's government and Senate processes.*



*L-R: Senators Richard Pan, Connie M. Leyva, Tony Mendoza and Janet Nguyen pose with the Honorable Jayanta Malla Baruah (center L), member of the Assam Legislative Assembly, the Honorable Harsh Sanghavi (center), member of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly and Mr. Ganesh Kumar (center R), president of the Mumbai Pradesh Youth Congress, after their introduction on the Senate Floor. The three officials from India were in Sacramento to learn about the separation of powers within U.S. government.*





*The Honorable Jorge Antonio Henn (front R), lieutenant-governor of the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina, addresses the Senate after he and his delegation were introduced by former Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff (back R).*



**ABOVE** His Excellency José Antonio Meade (center R), secretary of foreign affairs of Mexico, flanked on the left by (R-L) Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León, and Senators Ricardo Lara and Ted Gaines, and on the right by (L-R) Senator Lou Correa and Assemblymembers Roger Dickinson and Ken Cooley, visits the Senate floor after a meeting to discuss relations between California and Mexico.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



*L-R: Former Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff, Ms. Mei Mei Huff, Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León and Ms. Ezilda Samoville, director of the Senate Office of International Relations, meet with the Honorable Masaaki Yamazaki (center), president of the House of Councillors in the Japanese National Diet, and the Honorable Iwao Horii (R), member of the House of Councillors, to discuss relations between California and Japan.*

Sister state relationships and legislative exchanges between California and other regions of the world are a vital and rewarding link, enriching and benefitting both parties involved. As of 2016, California has 28 sister state relationships with regions spanning 18 different countries. These partnerships allow elected officials and business professionals to communicate and develop avenues through which to collaborate.

Over the years, the Foundation's support of these important endeavors has contributed to better policy making, and continues to result in an increased level of trade and investment and a more prosperous state.



*LEFT Members of the Moscow Duma visit the California Highway Patrol Academy & Training Facility, meeting with Mr. J.A. Farrow, CHP commissioner (center L), and Captain Brent Newman (center R) after receiving an overview of the CHP and a tour of the facility.*



**“A Sister State relationship is a significant connection between two regions established by their respective governments.**

The formal recognition of a special relationship lays the groundwork for a broad range of cooperative projects across the educational, financial and cultural spectrums. It’s a pact that initiates collaborations for the mutual betterment of both societies.”

— Ms. Ezilda Samoville, Board Member & Executive Director



*The Honorable Kevin de León (center), president pro tempore of the California State Senate, addresses the Honorable Andreu Mas-Colell, Catalanian minister of economy and knowledge, and eleven other government officials regarding trade and economic issues and the strengthening of ties between California and Catalonia.*



# DIPLOMATIC TIES



*The Honorable Hans-Ulrich Tanner, consul general of Switzerland in San Francisco, meets with Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León during his first official visit to Sacramento.*

California is home to over 140 consular offices, many of them located in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

The Foundation assists the State Senate in maintaining relationships with important foreign representatives residing in California by hosting official receptions and other diplomatic events in their honor.

**BELOW** *Former Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff (center) converses with the Honorable Carlos M. Sada (L), consul general of Mexico in Los Angeles, and the Honorable Alejandra Garcia Williams (R), head of the Consulate General in Santa Ana, during a meeting honoring the ten consuls of Mexico in California.*



*The Honorable Ana Valenzuela (center) and Walter Eduardo Duran Martínez (R), consuls general of El Salvador in San Francisco and Los Angeles, respectively, converse with Senator Bill Monning (L) on the Senate floor following their introduction.*



*Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León (L) exchanges gifts in a gesture of goodwill with the Honorable Jun Yamada (R), consul general of Japan in San Francisco, during the consul general's first official visit to Sacramento.*



*The Honorable Dr. Andy David (center R), consul general of Israel in San Francisco, accompanied by Mr. Gill Ovadia (second from R), consul of Israeli Economic Affairs, Consulate General of Israel in San Francisco, and Ms. Nika Ip (far R), of the Israeli Economic Institute, meets with Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León (third from R), former Senate Republican Leader Bob Huff (center L) and Senators (L - R) Jeff Stone, Benjamin Allen and Marty Block.*



# SPECIAL PROJECTS

**THE CALIFORNIA-JAPAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM** was established by state statute in 1996 to “correct the imbalance of understanding” between Japan and California. Thanks to support from private contributors, since 1997 the Foundation has helped sponsor the exchange of over 800 Japanese and California high school youth, with visits alternating each year between the two. During the two-week immersion programs students serve as “cultural ambassadors,” sharing their customs, language and culture with their hosts and participating in cultural activities designed to build cooperation, communication and understanding between our two regions.

The most recent exchange occurred in June of 2016, when thirty students and three chaperones from the Elk Grove Unified School District spent seventeen days in Osaka, Japan. While there, they stayed with host families and attended daily classes at local high schools along with other educational and cultural events.

***BELOW** Japanese students, participating in the 2015 California-Japan Scholars program (CJSP), pose with their host siblings and teachers after a visit to the State Capitol.*





**ABOVE** Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León meets with the Honorable Francisco Vega de Lamadrid, governor of Baja California, Mexico, who was in Sacramento to participate in a groundbreaking climate change agreement with California Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. and 10 other international leaders. California and Baja California, Mexico have shared a sister-state agreement since 1999.

The Foundation established the **CALIFORNIA MEXICO EXCHANGE PROGRAM** to increase cross-border dialogue and cooperation with California's largest trading partner. These efforts include legislative exchanges, conferences and other out-reach projects.



*During his first official visit to Sacramento, His Excellency Enrique Peña Nieto, president of Mexico, poses on the Senate Floor with California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., First Lady Anne Gust Brown, Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León, and members of the Latino Legislative Caucus, before addressing a joint session of the Legislature.*





*Ms. Didi Walson-Jack, head of the Legislative Drafting Department in the Bayelsa State Assembly, Nigeria, was the first recipient of the fellowship.*

**“The education and skill required for citizens to participate** in democratic governance are gained in exchanges like this, which are the product of collaboration between Legislatures of established democracies and those in emerging democracies. The California State Senate has commenced a worthwhile program which we hope would contribute to the sustenance of democracy in Nigeria.”

— Ms. Didi Walson-Jack  
Head, Legislative  
Drafting Department  
Bayelsa State Assembly

The California State Senate, in conjunction with the Foundation, is proud to offer positions in the **CIRF FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM** for the professional development of selected parliamentary and legislative staff from developing democracies. The goal is to strengthen the durability, representations, public access and independence from the executive branch of legislative bodies worldwide. Practical assignments in the State Senate enable fellows to interact with legislative staff providing a unique experience and senatorial insight. The duration of a typical fellowship is two or three weeks and is tailored to the visiting fellow’s individual training needs. An academic component is available through the Institute for Legislative Practice at McGeorge School of Law and through the International Program at California State University, Sacramento.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



*Mr. Emmanuel Audelo Enriquez, Mexican arts advocate and U.S. State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program Gold Star Alumnus, addresses the Senate after being introduced on the Floor by Senator Ricardo Lara. Mr. Audelo was touring the U.S. to promote tolerance through the arts.*

Through its development and support of legislative staff and student exchanges, the Foundation provides future leaders with incredible opportunities to acquire firsthand knowledge and understanding of worldwide politics and economics in order to be globally astute.



*Mr. Sayad Badalyan (L), a lawyer and lecturer at Yerevan State University in Armenia, and Mr. Kostylyev Oleksandr (R), from the Legislation Institute of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, participate in a month-long fellowship with the Legislative Counsel of California, sponsored by the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Cultural and Educational Affairs. Their fellowships, administered by the American Councils for International Education and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), allow promising young professionals the opportunity to gain experience in, and exposure to, government and law in the United States. They are pictured visiting the Senate Office of International Relations (SOIR).*



# FORGING PARTNERSHIPS



**AS ONE OF THE TENTH-LARGEST ECONOMIES IN THE WORLD**, trade and investment is a vital part of California's livelihood. The economic future of our State relies greatly upon the ability of the public and private sectors to join together and build a more cohesive and competitive society. By helping to host foreign delegations, the Foundation helps local leaders communicate with their counterparts in other countries, and create partnerships that further advance California's economic growth and prosperity.

The Foundation's bylaws provide for a thirty-member Board of Directors to guide its activities. Each member may designate an Alternate to vote on his or her behalf.

The quarterly board meetings are often attended by Senators who are involved with Foundation projects.

**ABOVE** Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León (L) shares a laugh with CIRF Board Members Barbara Morrow (center) and Ryan Brooks, at the 2015 CIRF Reception held at the State Capitol. The reception was attended by senators, Capitol staff, CIRF board members, and members of the Consular Corps.



Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León (fourth from R), along with (L-R) Senators Tom Berryhill, Mark Leno, Bill Monning, Richard Pan, Hannah-Beth Jackson, Marty Block, Jerry Hill and Jim Nielsen meet on the Floor with the Honorable Cassie Doyle (center R), consul general of Canada in San Francisco, the Honorable James Villeneuve (back L), consul general of Canada in Los Angeles, and Corporal Eric Sheppard (center L), of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to celebrate the 9th annual Canada Day in the Capitol.



*Senators Bill Monning (R) and Loni Hancock (L) listen to speakers at the 2015 CIRF reception, while Secretary of the California State Senate Daniel Alvarez (back L) and CIRF Board Member Donna Kaylor (back R) look on.*

**BELOW** *Senators Mike McGuire (2nd from L) and Benjamin Allen (2nd from R), along with Mr. Bruce Fuh (R), chief of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco and Ms. Ezilda Samoville (3rd from R), executive director of CIRF, listen to speakers at the 2015 CIRF reception.*



**ABOVE** *Senator Fran Pavley (L) converses with California International Relations Foundation (CIRF) Board Members Jerry Haleva (center) and Ryan Brooks (R) at the 2015 CIRF reception.*



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*Members of the bipartisan Senate Rules Committee serve on the Foundation's Advisory Committee.  
L-R: Senators Holly Mitchell, Anthony Cannella, President pro Tempore Kevin de León, Tom Berryhill, and Connie M. Leyva.*



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