

IMPACT LEADERSHIP

by Leigh Wellsview

working

The youngest of six sisters, Hiroko Tatebe was always determined to be an individual and to push the boundaries of success, both as a woman in Japan, as well as within her family. In an interview with *J@pan-Inc* she was quoted as saying, "I wanted to try what it's like being 'Hiroko' rather than being the 'sixth daughter of the Tatebe family.'" In order to accomplish that, Hiroko set off for California and studied just outside of LA, at Whittier College. Over lunch, the personable and successful Tatebe leans in, smiles, and confesses that the first semester was very difficult, but since she'd left friends and family back home with the determined declaration that it was what she had wanted to do, she didn't feel as though she could very well turn around and go back, as doing so would have proved her doubters correct!

Toughing it out she completed her degree, as well as a diploma from the Graduate School of Banking at the Bank Administration Institute and University of Wisconsin. She then went on to attend the College of Financial Planning in Denver, becoming a Certified Financial Planner. After her initially rocky start, Hiroko settled successfully in California, eventually becoming a member of the upper management at the Mizuho Corporate Bank of California (then the Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank of California).

As she turned 50, Hiroko decided it was time to do something new and it was then that she began working earnestly to help women, both in California and Japan, finally break the glass ceiling. Retiring from Mizuho, she helped to found Global Enhancement of Women's Executive Leadership (GEWEL) in Japan in 2003, followed by the creation of its LA-based NPO counterpart GOLD (Global Organization for Leadership and Diversity) in 2006. GOLD's mission statement is to "foster professional and leadership growth of current and future business and professional women by providing educational, inspirational, and motivational activities and events that build leadership bridges across the Pacific." In 2007, GOLD had a very successful leadership symposium in LA, and this year, in partnership with GEWEL, the event is coming to Tokyo.

On October 21, interested women (and men) will be gathering to discuss and learn about Impact Leadership, which "calls for a new type of leader—one who understands him [or] herself well and takes initiative to create a positive impact on others, organisations, and society, as well as bottom line results." The day-long seminar is full of panel discussions, break-out sessions, and keynote addresses. Speakers come from both the US and Japan and are both male and female. The speakers in attendance will include Izumi

Kobayashi, president, Merrill Lynch Japan Securities Co. Ltd, who will be speaking on a panel about "Executive Perspectives on 21st Century Leadership," moderated by Susan J. Onuma, partner, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP. Other prominent female speakers include Marilyn Johnson, vice president, marketing development, IBM, and Maria Conteras-Sweet, founder and chairwoman, Promerica Bank, who will be conducting a second keynote speech on "A New Model For Impact Leadership."

Other discussions in the seminar will include "Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders," a keynote address by Atushi Nishida, president and CEO, Toshiba,

as well as a breakout session on "Womenomics in Japan and Business Opportunities," by Kathy Matsui, managing director, Goldman Sachs Japan Co., Ltd and Debbie Howard, president, Japan Market Resource Network. Kathy Matsui is actually the first woman to coin the term 'womenomics,' which refers to the theory that women and the financial decisions they make are key to economic development and practice.

While primarily geared at those already in the corporate world, Tatebe is reassuring that this seminar will be of benefit to those interested in seeing how far they, as women, can go in their professional lives, acting as an interesting springboard for women about to jump into corporate life. Conference organisers also expect educators, entrepreneurs, and leaders from the non-profit sector to attend.

Thanks to the international nature of the symposium, with speakers coming from both LA and Tokyo, and with the conference itself alternating between countries each year, there is a unique chance to compare and combine knowledge about being a successful woman in the corporate world; to "[build] bridges across the Pacific." Learning from each other, women can also discuss the differences between work life in the US and Japan. As Hiroko points out, back in the States corporate diversity typically means working with those from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, whereas here, where the population is predominantly Japanese, diversity in the work place may mean having

The Impact Leadership Symposium will be unique and inspiring.

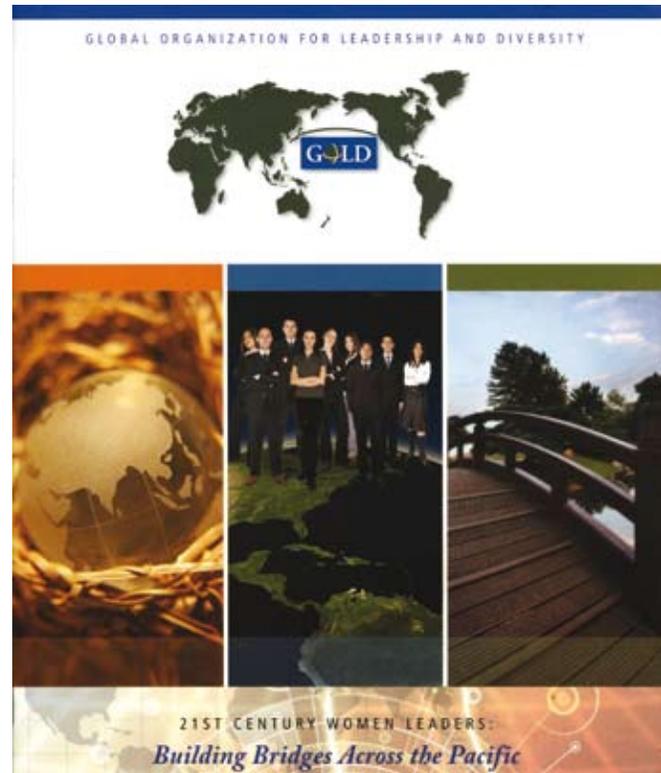


image provided by GOLD

more women or workers from a different age group.

To that end, following on from the symposium on October 21 will be a two-day "21st Century Leadership Development Workshop" held by the LA-based NPO LEAP and aimed at "future leaders and managers with diversity/human resource/training experience." This workshop, also open to both men and women, will use the "lens of Japanese culture" as a way to maximise leadership and potential by using gender and age diversity to your advantage. The workshop will concentrate on handling changes in the workplace, understanding the impact of behavioural styles on communication, developing leadership self-awareness, and more. Guest speakers will include Glen Fukushima, president and CEO, Airbus Japan KK and sessions throughout the workshop include "Working with Multiple Generations" and "Managing Your Career and Life." Both events promise to be unique and inspiring, giving women a unique chance to connect with others in the corporate world. This is also a special opportunity to understand the specific challenges, concerns, and successes of women in the workplace in the US vs Japan and vice versa.

For more information on this unique symposium to build leadership among women in the workplace, visit www.impactleadershipsymposium.org. To learn more about the two-day workshop concentrating on leadership and diversity, email leap@gewel.org. BAB