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Global Perspectives: Welcoming Shoko Ohkubo to Masuda Funai

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By: Shoko Ohkubo

Practices: Corporate, Finance & Acquisitions

Masuda Funai is pleased to welcome Shoko Ohkubo, a visiting foreign attorney from Anderson Mori & Tomotsune, one of Japan's largest and most respected law firms. Based in our firm's Chicago office, Shoko joins Masuda Funai as part of her ongoing efforts to deepen her understanding of the U.S. legal and business landscape while working alongside attorneys who regularly advise Japanese companies operating in the United States.

Shoko's practice focuses on cross-border and domestic mergers and acquisitions (M&A), corporate restructurings and other strategic business transactions. She has extensive experience advising clients on acquisitions, tender offers, overseas listings, post-acquisition reorganizations and other complex matters involving Japan, the U.S., Europe and broader Asia. Her clients span a wide range of industries, including automotive, manufacturing, technology, consumer products and food and beverage.

As part of our new **Perspectives series**, we sat down with Shoko to discuss her experience in Chicago, cross-border business considerations and what she hopes to take away from her time at Masuda Funai.

Why Chicago & Why Masuda Funai?

For Shoko, the opportunity offered a unique chance to gain firsthand insight into how legal advice is delivered in the U.S.

"The opportunity to experience U.S. legal practice from the inside while working closely with attorneys who regularly advise Japanese companies doing business in the United States was very appealing. My practice in Japan has focused primarily on M&A and cross-border transactions, so I saw this as a valuable opportunity to better understand not only U.S. law, but also how legal advice is delivered in a different business and cultural environment."

Chicago's longstanding ties to the Japanese business community made the city a natural fit.

"Chicago was also particularly attractive to me because of its strong connection with Japanese companies and its importance as a business hub."

A Cross-Border Perspective

Having advised clients on international transactions for years, Shoko appreciates the importance of understanding not just legal systems but also business cultures. One of the key observations she has shared with clients involves the importance of proactive risk management in the U.S.

"Japanese companies may be accustomed to resolving matters through long-term relationships, consensus and practical discussions, but in the U.S. contractual language, documentation and compliance procedures can have a much greater impact on the outcome of a dispute or transaction."

She believes understanding these differences early can help companies effectively manage risk while preserving strong business relationships. Shoko also notes differences in communication and decision-making styles between the two countries.

"In the U.S., lawyers and businesspeople often identify the key issue, risk or disagreement very explicitly and discuss it directly. In Japan, there can be more emphasis on context, consensus-building and preserving the overall relationship."

Bringing New Perspectives Back to Japan

When asked what she hopes to bring back to clients and colleagues in Japan, Shoko emphasized the value of understanding how U.S. businesses and lawyers approach decision-making.

"Knowing the law itself is important, but I think it is equally valuable to understand how U.S. counsel approaches negotiations, communicates with clients and balances legal risk with commercial objectives."

Sharing Culture Through Food

Outside of the office, Shoko enjoys sharing aspects of Japanese culture with colleagues and friends abroad, particularly Japan's approach to food.

"I enjoy sharing Japanese food culture, particularly the importance placed on seasonality, presentation and the use of fresh ingredients."

Exploring Chicago

During her time in the city, Shoko is looking forward to experiencing everything Chicago has to offer.

"I am excited to experience Chicago as much as possible, especially its restaurants, architecture, sports and different neighborhoods."

We are delighted to welcome Shoko to Masuda Funai and look forward to the perspectives and experiences she will share during her time with the firm.

Masuda Funai is a full-service law firm with offices in [Chicago](#), [Detroit](#), [Los Angeles](#) and [Schaumburg](#).