

Genjiro Katayama awarded IBA honorary member

In its ten first years of existence, we did not have any IBA honorary member. The time has now come to acknowledge our gratitude to one of our most deserving members.

In 2020, the International Blackcurrant Association has therefore awarded its first



Honorary Life Membership to Genjiro Katayama.

Genjiro Katayama and the IBA

Genjiro Katayama first met the members of the global blackcurrant “family” in 2008, when delegates from more than 14 countries attended the world’s first global blackcurrant conference in New Zealand. Katayama was approached by New Zealand growers to assist develop the conference so that it could become the starting point for a unique international organisation. Katayama agreed to be a major sponsor, assist with the planning through his own team, and also to address the delegates with his perspective on how countries could work together to each achieve more for their members and for their societies.

His plenary presentation was a significant factor in creating the mindset that the many diverse countries could achieve much more by working together. The result was the 2009 conference in Copenhagen and the creation of the embryonic International Blackcurrant Association. At each and every conference since then,

Genjiro Katayama's company has been a major supporter and sponsor of the IBA.

IBA honorary member Genjiro Katayama's background

Genjiro Katayama was born in Japan in 1959. He graduated from Konan University in Japan with a Law degree, majoring in Law, and has been involved in business management since he was a university student.

Success in business led to his establishing many corporations and he has held various Director/CEO positions. His companies include: Japan Food and Chemistry; Jasbco (Japan Social Business Consulting); Digital Standard; and most well-known to members of the IBA - **Beneseed**.

His business domain covers a wide range of fields, including medical and health, regional revitalization, system development, entertainment, and finance. He is especially interested in the positive dynamics of relationships between related organizations, and between his beloved Japan and other countries.

Philanthropist Genjiro Katayama

In 2019 Katayama was made a Visiting Professor (New Business Creation Theory / Venture Business Theory) of the Faculty of Business Administration, Tokyo Fuji University. In this role he explores, with his students, the theme of "the fusion of learning and business" so that "business is a successful, ongoing dynamic learning environment always relevant to the future". He has authored books such as "Live out today with all the might" (*Hojosha*).

Notably, when he was 23, his father fell ill and became bedridden.

Since then, for 22 years, Katayama has been caring for his father at home. This personal family experience taught him the potential fragility of humanity. From his own experience he decided to contribute to society through his own business success being based on sound and ethical practices, and a sense of "family and social harmony" within his company structures.

Creation of the JBA

In 2016 Katayama established the Japan Blackcurrant Association. This organisation works to help humanity benefit from the inherent natural goodness in the blackcurrant fruit.