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Kiwanis International awards Masa Kogure 2014 World Service Medal

CHIBA, Japan (July 19, 2014) – At the 99th Annual Kiwanis International Convention, Kiwanis International honored Masa Kogure, founder of Table For Two, with the service organization’s highest award—the 2014 World Service Medal—for his dedication to ending hunger in Africa while curbing obesity in developed nations.

“We were impressed with Masa Kogure’s ingenuity and dedication to solving two world issues,” said Kiwanis International President Gunter Gasser. “His passion fits well with Kiwanis’ mission: to serve the children of the world. Childhood obesity and childhood hunger are two very different problems that affect the world’s children. We must do what we can to help.”

There are seven billion people in the world, and more than 1 billion live in extreme poverty without reliable access to adequate food and nutrition. At the other end of the spectrum, an equal number of people in developed nations suffer from obesity. Table For Two (TFT) was founded in 2007 with the goal of simultaneously tackling both health problems and addressing this food imbalance. The concept is to transfer calories from one part of the world with an excess, to populations in need.

Table For Two is one of Japan’s fastest growing nonprofit organizations and has distributed more than 16 million meals to African children.

“Our approach is to help by providing school meals. But longer term, that’s not sustainable. The communities we assist need to be self-sustaining,” Kogure said. “With this in mind, we have already
started trialing projects where students learn about the latest farming technology after school. They then become advocates of modern farming, and so the students become teachers and help spread the knowledge. We also encourage them to grow cash crops in their school gardens so they can earn money that they then use to purchase the main staples they need for meals.”

TFT works with 500 partners in the developed world in Japan, US, UK, Switzerland, India, Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong, including corporate cafeterias, university dining halls, governments and public restaurants. Partners serve balanced meals to their clients and transfer US$ 0.25 per meal (the value of the excess calories) to TFT and its Millennium Village Project, which currently serves nearly 19,000 school children in Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda. TFT options are also sold in more than 400 convenience stores in Japan.

During the convention’s closing session, Kiwanis International President Gunter Gasser and Kiwanis International Foundation President Lance Incitti presented the award to Kogure.

As an organization dedicated to service, Kiwanis International promotes service not only among its members, but also among young people and the public at large. The Kiwanis International Board of Trustees established the Kiwanis World Service Medal in 1985 to recognize individuals who devote a significant part of their lives to meeting the needs of others.

The World Service Medal is presented annually at the Kiwanis International convention, being held this year in Chiba. Previous winners have included Mother Teresa, actors and humanitarians Sir Roger Moore and Audrey Hepburn and U.S. First Ladies Nancy Reagan and Rosalyn Carter.

About Kiwanis
Founded in 1915, Kiwanis International is a global organization of clubs and members dedicated to serving the children of the world. Kiwanis and its family of clubs, including Circle K International for university students, Key Club for students age 14–18, Builders Club for students age 11–14, Kiwanis Kids for students age 6–12 and Aktion Club for adults living with disabilities, dedicate annually more than 18 million service hours to strengthen communities and serve children. The Kiwanis International family comprises nearly 600,000 adult and youth members in 80 countries and geographic areas. For more information about Kiwanis International, please visit www.kiwanis.org.

About Table For Two
In our world of 7 billion, 1 billion suffer from undernutrition, while another 1 billion suffer from obesity. TABLE FOR TWO rights this imbalance by simultaneously addressing the two opposing problems through a unique “calorie transfer” program. By partnering with over 600 corporations, universities, restaurants, and organizations implementing our program in their establishments and products, TABLE FOR TWO has served millions of healthy meals to both sides of the “table.”
On one side people are eating healthier meals, and on the other children are receiving nutritious school meals. In this way, we can say that when you dine at TABLE FOR TWO, you never dine alone. TABLE FOR TWO was initiated by and is an official affiliate of the World Economic Forum’s Young Global Leaders. For more information, visit www.tablefor2.org.