

**Learning from the Past:  
The 2011 Japan Triple Disaster and Emergency Preparedness  
in Southeast Texas**

Event Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2016

**Local Contact:**

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**Program:** Asia Society Texas Center, 1370 Southmore Blvd, Houston, TX 77004

**Wednesday, December 7, 2016**

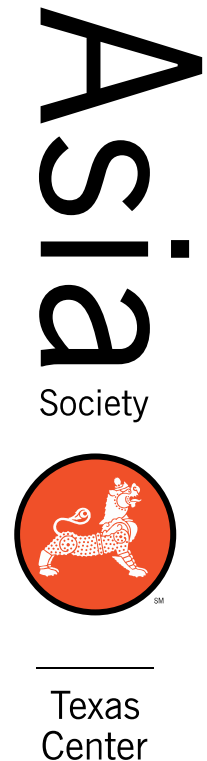
- 6:00 PM** Moderator and panelists arrive at Asia Society for brief sit down (Quan Conference Room)
- 6:20 PM** Sound check
- 7:00 PM** Program begins: Introductory Remarks by **Edward R. Allen III**
- ~7:05 PM** **Saleena Jafry** invites the **moderator** and **panelists** to take stage. **Moderator** leads conversation.
- ~7:50 PM** **Moderator** opens floor for questions from audience, calls on audience members.
- ~8:15 PM** **Moderator** wraps up Q&A. **Saleena Jafry** goes on stage to thank speakers and close program.

**Potential Panel Questions**

- What was the immediate response to the Triple Disaster and how did the US diplomatic corps and armed forces communicate with the Japanese government to begin Operation Tomodachi?
- How did Operation Tomodachi affect future relief and recovery efforts both abroad and domestically?

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- How do city officials, civil engineers, and academic experts work together to mitigate economic loss from natural occurrences?
- What steps can be taken to protect both the people who live in a region and their economic vitality?
- How is the Japanese experience similar or different to Southeast Texas?
- What did we learn from Hurricane Ike which can help us prepare in the present, both from an engineering perspective and the economic impact of the disaster?
- What are the best tactics to fund these massive disaster preparation projects?

## Photos & Biographies

### Panelists



**Suzanne Basalla** serves as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the U.S.-Japan Council. From March 2010 to September 2012, Suzanne served as Senior Advisor to Ambassador Roos in U.S. Embassy Tokyo. In that capacity, she supported the Ambassador on the full portfolio of security, economic, political and cultural issues in the U.S.-Japan relationship. She has been involved in the creation and development of the TOMODACHI Initiative, a public-private partnership

established in cooperation with the U.S.-Japan Council. Previous to her Embassy assignment, she was Director for Japan in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, DC (2006-2010). Suzanne had served as a Country Director for Japan in the Pentagon from 2004 until promotion to Director for Japan. Prior to joining the Office of the Secretary of Defense, she served as an officer in the United States Navy. In the Navy, her assignments included service on the staff of Commander, Seventh Fleet on board the USS BLUE RIDGE based in Yokosuka, Japan. Suzanne received a master's degree in Asian Studies from the George Washington University and graduated from the University of Virginia. In 2008, she received the inaugural Ryoza Kato Award for service to the U.S.-Japan Alliance.



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**Jim Blackburn** is a Professor in the Practice of Environmental Engineering in the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department at Rice University, teaching courses in sustainable development and environmental law. He is also a practicing environmental lawyer with the BlackburnCarter law firm in Houston and a Rice faculty scholar at the Baker Institute. At Rice, he serves as the co-director of the Severe Storms Prevention, Education and Evacuation from Disaster (SSPEED) Center and as director of the undergraduate minor in energy and water sustainability. He has received various public service awards, including the Barbara C. Jordan Community Advocate Award from Texas Southern University in 2007, the National Conservation Achievement Award from the National Wildlife Federation in 2001 and the Bob Eckhardt Lifetime Achievement Award for coastal preservation efforts from the Texas General Land Office in 1998. In 2003, he was awarded an honorary membership by the American Institute of Architects for legal work associated with urban quality of life issues in Houston. Blackburn received a B.A. in history and a J.D. from The University of Texas at Austin and an M.S. in environmental science from Rice University.



**Colonel (Ret.) Christopher Sallese** is Coastal Programs Manager at Dannenbaum Engineering Copration. He spent more than 25 years in the U.S. Army before entering the private sector, including more than three years as the Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Galveston District. His extensive background and qualifications include leadership and management experience in engineering; emergency management; coastal operations and management; ecosystem restoration and resource sustainability; risk mitigation; strategic planning; interagency operations; and disaster response and recovery. During his military career, he was extensively involved in the planning, programming and execution of federal civil works programs along the Texas Gulf Coast encompassing flood damage reduction, navigation, regulatory activities, water quality, environmental conservation, recreation, emergency response services, and economic vitality.

**Moderator TBD**

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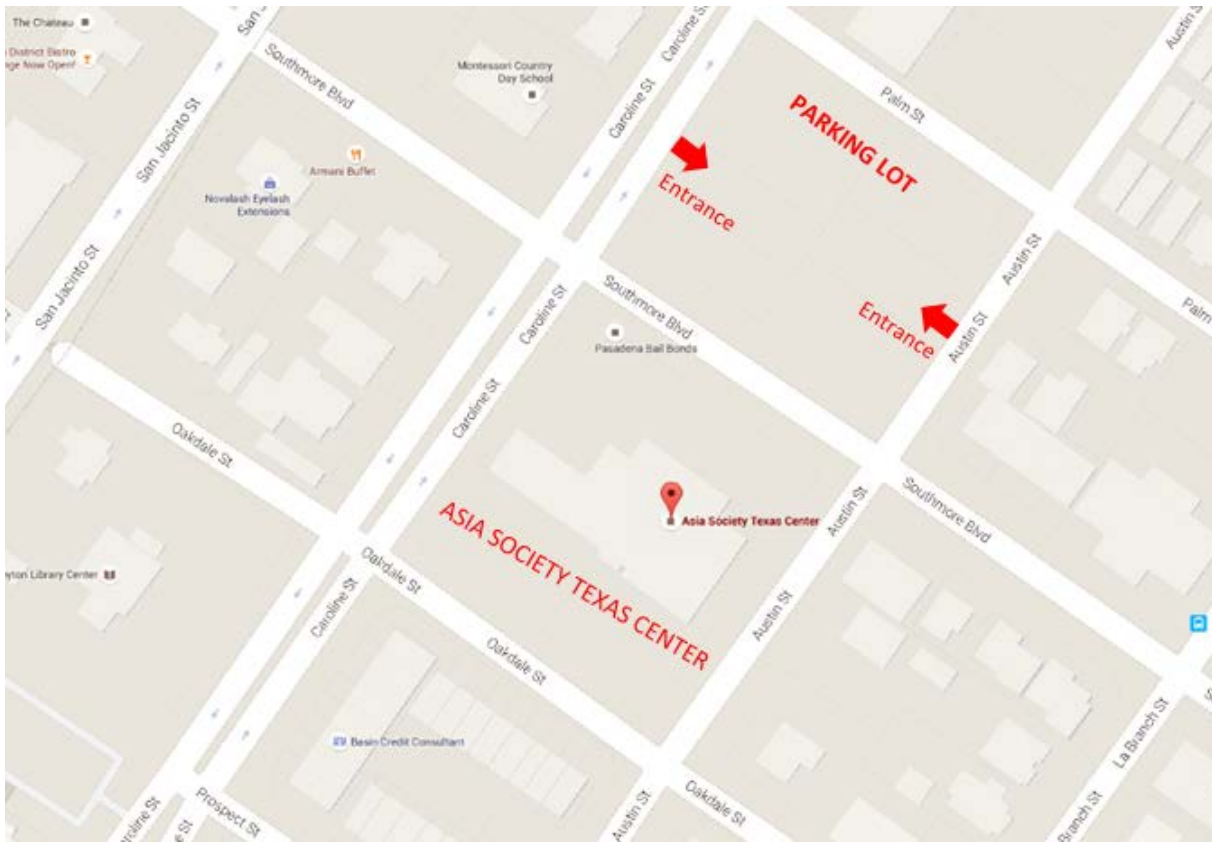
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