

2017 TMNA R&D York Township (Michigan) Expansion Grand Opening - Shinichi Yasui

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TMNA R&D Grand Opening

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Shinichi Yasui, Executive Vice President – Toyota Motor North America Research and Development

[JIM LENTZ]

Thank you Jim. And thank you Governor Snyder, and other distinguished guests, for your time today to share this exciting event with us!

Good morning everyone!

While I am new to Michigan, I feel very welcomed by the entire Toyota team and members of our local communities. In fact, I moved to Michigan officially on April 1st!

I have already met a great number of you while running the Trail to the Victors 5K at the University of Michigan last month.

It was a great way to start my time here.

As Jim mentioned, I had the honor of being the Corolla and Scion Chief Engineer before moving to Michigan.

My first Chief Engineer job was to support Corolla for the U.S. market. I then served as the Global Chief Engineer for Corolla for almost 10 years.

In this role, I was able to visit Michigan many times. I think that's why I feel so comfortable in my new role here.

I am excited to join the Toyota North America Research and Development Team, especially as we celebrate Toyota's 40-year R&D anniversary in Michigan.

Toyota research and development also has a rich history in Michigan.

Back in 1972, Toyota acquired Hilbert's Garage, a small auto repair shop not too far from here, and only one mile from the Ann Arbor Environmental Protection Agency test lab.

We supported emission certification of Toyota vehicles being imported into the U.S., which led to the Toyota Technical Center in 1977.

Since then, the facility has grown into one of three main operations that now make-up Toyota's North American Research and Development campus in the heart of the auto industry in Southeast Michigan!

I am excited to share with you that this is the largest research and development center outside of Japan for Toyota.

In Japan, we refer often to the term "Monozukuri," which means "Carefully making things by team work."

Similar to One Toyota, Monozukuri is also a mindset for all of us at Toyota.

Toyota's commitment to Monozukuri ensures we pursue a sustainable method of making ever better vehicles that delight our customers.

We also have carefully applied Monozukuri to our R&D facilities and teams.

Last year, we expanded the Toyota proving grounds in Arizona by adding a Vehicle Dynamic test course.

We are so proud of this 12,000-acre facility that features a 10-mile high speed oval track and several miles of test surfaces.

We use this track in the development of vehicles for our customers across North America, including performance and reliability.

Today, we celebrate the expansion of Toyota's vehicle development operations with a new prototype development facility and Supplier Center here on the York Township campus.

This expansion also supports greater collaboration between our purchasing group, design teams, evaluation group in Arizona, and supplier partners to satisfy the needs of Toyota customers today and into the future.

Later this year, the expansion of our powertrain facilities will be completed in Ann Arbor.

That campus supports the design, evaluation, and calibration of new engine and transmission projects.

We are now even better positioned to develop those powertrain systems for North American designed, engineered and manufactured vehicles.

Thinking to our future, this new R&D campus aligns with our One Toyota mindset for all team members.

We are able to collaborate more effectively with members of our Toyota Research Institute, or TRI, here in Ann Arbor.

And, work closely with Toyota Connected in Plano, Texas.

This helps us redefine the next-generation of mobility and provides ever better ways to serve our customers, our communities and our team members.

The best news of all, this campus brings together Toyota R&D teams in one location, which deepens collaboration.

I, along with the more than 1,600 Toyota team members here in Southeast Michigan, anticipate a bright future with supplier and community engagement, development of technology and human talent and ever better cars for our customers.

Now I'd like to welcome back Kristen Tabar to help share a bit of a surprise!

Kristen, will you join me?