

Kobe College Corporation Japan Education Exchange

# Newsletter



## -SAVE THE DATE-

### 105<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Friday, September 19

7pm – 9pm (CT)

Saturday, September 20

9am-11am (JPT)

Via Zoom

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Dr. Yuki Ohigashi

V.P. Finance/Treasurer

Ken Tornheim

V.P. Programs

Dr. Cindi SturtzSreetharan

V.P. Administration/Secretary

Tami Mizuno

Dr. Liv Coleman

Angie Gaspar

Elizabeth Hartung-Cole

Dr. David Janes

Toyoko Kodama

Abbi Mayland

Dr. Seiko Okada

Go Sugiura

Dr. Roberta Wollons

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Kanae Takenaka

KCC-JEE

5 Revere Drive

Suite 200-#0024

Northbrook, IL 60062

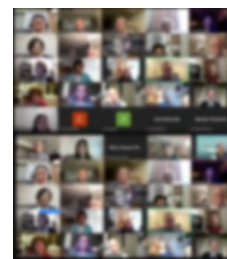
TEL (847) 386-7661

WEB [www.kccjee.org](http://www.kccjee.org)

Email [office@kccjee.org](mailto:office@kccjee.org)

## The 104<sup>th</sup> KCC-JEE Annual Meeting

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, the 104<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of KCC-JEE was held on Zoom. Attendees included the current and former board members, members of KCC-JEE, former participants of the KCC-JEE programs, and friends from Kobe College (KC). We asked the Chancellor of KC and the KCHS Principal to share a greeting from the school. For the program updates, we asked former participants of our programs to share a message with the theme of “What Are They Doing Now?” It was a wonderful time to reconnect with each other and to hear how our programs have impacted the participants. We hope to share a recording of the meeting on our website soon.



## The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony of Kobe College

Kobe College, for which KCC was founded, will be celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. As their constitutional partner, it is a special celebration for KCC as well, so KC has extended their invitation to us. The anniversary ceremony, consisting of a commemorative service and a lecture, will take place on Sunday, October 12, 2025 (Founding Day of KC). There will be other events throughout the week.

If you are interested in learning more about it or possibly attending the ceremony, please contact our office.



As part of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, KC is building a new building. This building, the Sueko Kobayashi Memorial Building, will be used for the Department of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences. At the end of July this year, they had a groundbreaking ceremony. The construction of the building is expected to be complete in the spring of 2026.



## Meet Our New Board Members: David Janes

When I first stepped foot in Japan in 1993 as an exchange student at the Japan Center for Michigan Universities, I had no idea how transformative the experience would be or that it would lead to a lifetime of building understanding between Japan and the United States. Today I have the honor of working as Vice President, North America, for the International House of Japan and concurrently, Executive Director of the American Friends of the International House of Japan after many years of working with the U.S.-Japan Foundation and other organizations. I have a deep passion for traditional Japanese architecture and aesthetics and feel that the U.S.-Japan relationship has so much to offer each country and the world. As a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar at Doshisha University I studied under Dr. Koichi Mori who later became Chancellor of Kobe College, and I am delighted to serve as a new member of the KCC-JEE Board.



## Meet Our New Board Members: Seiko Okada



I grew up in Kobe, Japan and attended Kobe College High School. Gottschalk teachers were kind, funny, and like big sisters to us. Through our Gottschalk teachers, I discovered the wonders of language, culture, and diversity. I moved to North Carolina as a physician scientist, and later became a lawyer. In addition to providing assistance in intellectual property, I also assist non-profit and educational organizations with their legal and organizational needs. I am honored to join the KCC-JEE board and look forward to working together to achieve our mission and promote KC and other educational opportunities.

## Get to Know Our Honorary Board Members: Jeanne Sokolowski

Jeanne Sokolowski started her relationship with Kobe Jogakuin in 1997, when she began teaching at the school. After her three years in Japan, she went on to earn a Master of Education. This took her to Korea where she conducted research on a Fulbright scholarship and subsequently went on to receive a second master's degree in English literature. It was during this period that she became involved with KCC-JEE, initially as the coordinator for the High School Essay Contest and then as a board member. After several decades in academia, first teaching English literature and composition and then working as a national fellowships advisor, she embarked on a new career by joining the Department of State in January 2023 as a Foreign Service Officer in the Public Diplomacy track. She is currently serving at her first post in Hyderabad, India after completing Urdu language training. She credits her time in Japan (and her struggles with hiragana, katakana, and kanji) with her success in learning the Urdu alphabet and with planting the seeds for a career in cross-cultural relationship building.



Jeanne with two former essay contest winners, Grace B. and Zach S.

## Very Busy Gottschalk Teachers and Recruitment Committee Members!

By Elizabeth Hartung-Cole

The four Gottschalk teachers at Kobe College High School were deeply involved this summer and early fall preparing for the next term's classes, traveling to various English contests and on school trips, and working with the English Club for their performance at the Cultural Festival.



KCHS students preparing for an English debate over the summer

Gottschalk Teacher Ms. Stephanie Hoelker was especially pleased that more students than ever before worked hard to participate in the English debate at the HEnDA Kansai Tournament. She stated that "the team became super motivated

and requested we join another tournament, which will take place in November in Kobe."

The Gottschalk Teacher Recruitment Committee also had a busy summer!

First, you may ask, who was on this year's committee and what is their connection to KCHS?

- Abigail Mayland: former Gottschalk Teacher 2017 – 2019
- Erin Choi: former US exchange student at KCHS and later a Gottschalk Teacher 2005 – 2007
- Linda Gosselin: former Missionary Teacher 1978 - 1984
- Toyoko Kodama: graduate of KCHS and of KC
- Elizabeth Hartung-Cole: former Missionary Teacher 1977 – 1981

This summer the committee examined 53 applications and evaluated 15 semi-finalist videos to determine the four finalists. Each finalist was then interviewed and performed a demonstration lesson for the committee. These were recorded and sent to KC for the English Department to

choose the finalist for the contract for the 2025 - 2027 position. Finally, all of this was made technically possible by our Program Administrator, Ms. Takenaka.

In our next newsletter we will introduce you to the next Gottschalk Teacher!

## Graduate Fellowship Program

By Liv Coleman

Our 2024-2025 KCC-JEE Graduate Fellowship award winner is Lena Paulsen, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at the University of Minnesota. Her research project is titled, "Shojo Modernity: Queer Girlhood and Tuberculosis in Early Twentieth Century Japan." She will be affiliated with Kobe College for her research in Japan.



## *Give your gift today!*

Your support makes a difference! By donating today, you are helping to empower students, teachers, and scholars in the U.S. and Japan, including those at Kobe College. You can make your gift online through [our website](#) or by sending a check to the KCC-JEE office. Thank you for your generosity!



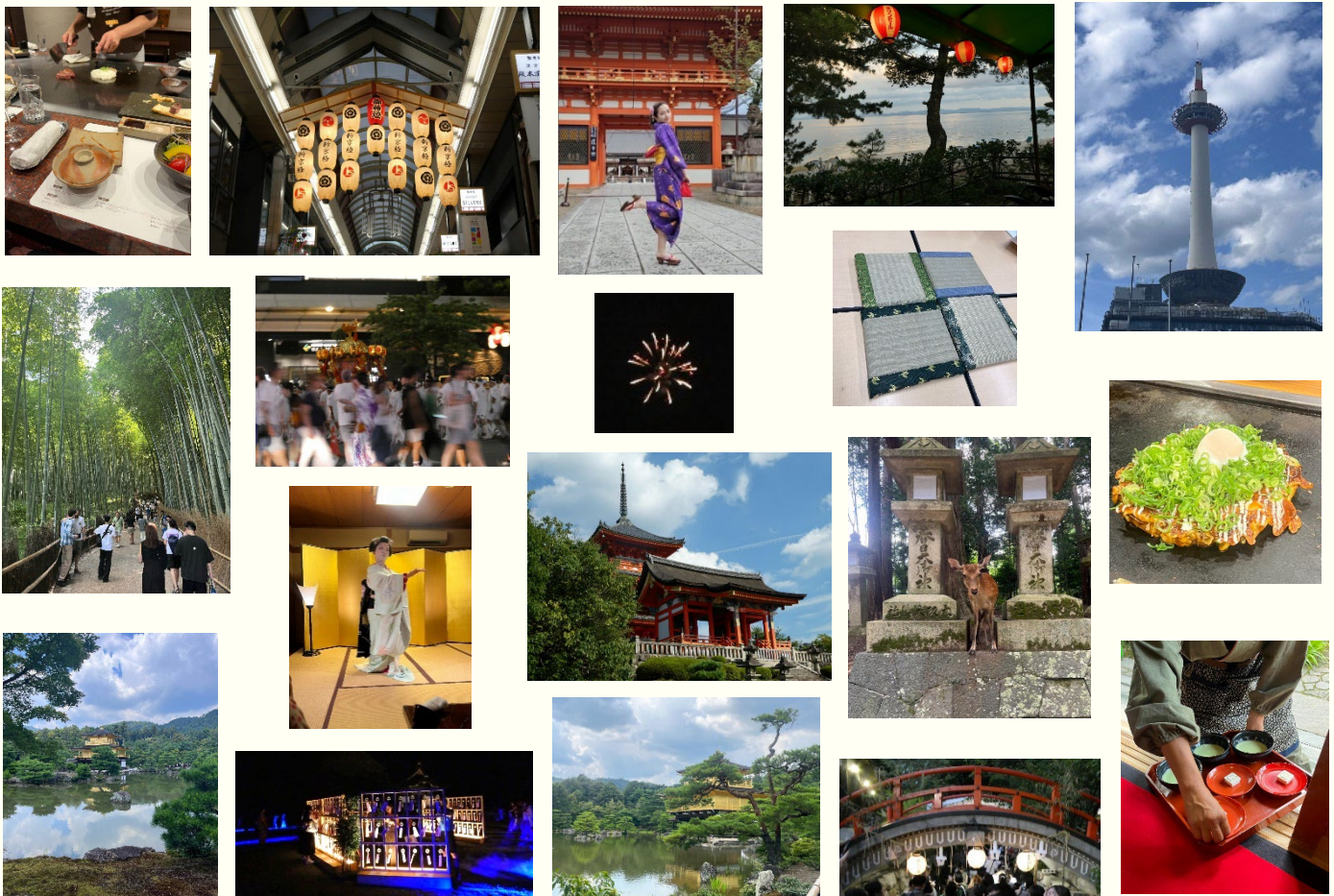
## High School Essay Contest Winners from Two Different Years

By Elizabeth Hartung-Cole

This summer, KCC-JEE sent two high school essay contest winners to Japan to study at the Kyoto Institute of Culture and Language for three weeks. They received roundtrip airfare, intensive Japanese language instruction, and room and board with a host family. Sedona Smith won in 2024 and the 2020 winner, Jaden Martinez (now a college student), patiently postponed her award until it was safe to travel due to COVID. You are invited to read both of their excellent essays on our website at <https://www.kccjee.org/highschool-essay-contest>.

The KCC-JEE advertises the High School Essay Contest throughout the United States at high schools that offer Japanese Language courses. This year's 73 applications came from a wide variety of states.

## Jaden & Sedona's Photo Gallery



## KCC-JEE Friend Spotlight: Ms. Keiko Harada

A former principal at Kobe College High School



This photo was taken in 1956 when I was a Junior (English major) at Kobe College. Just before I left for Rockford College to study, Dr. Jeremy Ingalls and Dr. Dearing Lewis from RC (both Professors of English) came to visit KC on their way back home from their trip to Europe. At Kenwood House, missionary teachers held a welcome party and I was invited to meet the guests. I must have been so nervous and excited that I don't remember how I came to take a group photo of all the missionary teachers at Kenwood. Many of you have dear old memories with them, don't you?

I treasured this photo for a long time. To be honest, I put it in my photograph box and forgot all about it because this event was just the beginning of my adventurous life that followed. When I went to the U.S. shortly after, the time was only ten years after WWII, and Japan was in the midst of recovery. A lot of things I saw and experienced in the States were quite "new" to me, things I had never seen before.



My trip across the Pacific was by a cargo ship from Yokohama to Portland, Oregon, to Chicago by Northern Pacific, and to Rockford by bus. Believe it or not, I was surprised to see seamless stockings, running hot water, dining in cafeterias, students smoking on campus, people eating ice cream on the street walking, students taking an exam without a supervisor, etc. etc. I

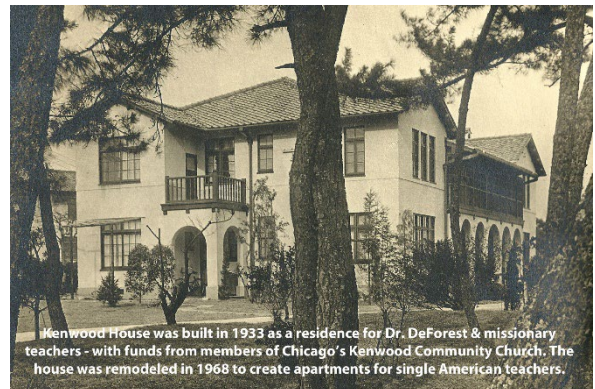


Ms. Keiko Harada

experienced many things in my classes: swimming, canoeing, hockey in Fi-Ed, the dissection of a cat in Zoology, and a field trip to The School of Architecture at Taliesin in Art. A series of memories continue in my mind.

Quite incidentally, I found the photo when I was working as Dean of KCHS. I showed it to Mr. Takamichi Yamamoto, then head officer of the HS, and he immediately made a print with a caption. I hope this will lead you to recall your days at KC and thereafter.

*From Archive: Kenwood House*



Kenwood House was built in 1933 as a residence for Dr. DeForest & missionary teachers - with funds from members of Chicago's Kenwood Community Church. The house was remodeled in 1968 to create apartments for single American teachers.



## My History with KCC-JEE: An Interview with Pat Gottschalk

... continued from previous issue



**When you first moved to Japan, did you experience any culture shock? What did you love best about immersing yourself in the culture? What was the most difficult part of living abroad for you?**

Arriving in Japan was culture shock. I grew up in Kansas and went to college in Oklahoma but had never been outside the U.S. before. I was open to going anywhere — the sooner the better, but I didn't know about 'culture shock' until I was in it. I don't recall that I ever got homesick because I was too busy and too absorbed in Japan. I started an English Bible class as expected at Shukugawa church for college students, and we traveled widely together. They were

delighted to introduce me to special places and customs throughout Japan — such as Nagasaki at New Years and staying in a Buddhist Temple on the Ise Peninsula.

**Did you have any mentors in Japan or from KCC?**

My strongest mentor at KC was Angie Crew. She was such a grounded and kind person but also had high expectations.

In KCC, my mentors were Beulah Scott, Martha Farley and Harold Finley. They were all accomplished, highly skilled and experienced on the KCC Board. They all believed powerfully in the mission of KCC and had a strong sense of appropriate governance. Harold was deeply experienced with investing and managing funds. We could always rely on his astute judgment about managing the KCC endowment and our Board spending decisions. Martha led the recruitment of teachers and started the Homestay Exchange Program. Beulah was wise about administration and kept a balance between innovation and responsibility.

**If you could create a new program for KCC-JEE today, what would it look like?**

I would focus on the renewal of both KC and KCC-JEE in order to build up support for the work of KCC-JEE and its ties to KC. Maintaining the vital tie between the two is important for the future strong credibility of KCC-JEE as well as a modernized view of the education of women. KCC-JEE can easily drift into looking like a friendly dinosaur on the current education scene. It needs to appear vital and innovative, in order to attract young professionals to committees and the Board.

Study abroad scholarships can make KC stand out — as well as KCC-JEE.

Young women in Japan need opportunities. Choosing a college is key to their future. They want to choose the school that can move them forward.

Since KC has two programs that they believe will attract students -Global Studies and Psychology- KCC-JEE could collaborate in offering a study abroad program for each in order to add special attraction to KC. KCC could use these new programs to revitalize its own image and attractiveness. These programs would benefit KCC-JEE as they allow for new relationships with universities.

**What keeps you busy these days?**

I write a monthly interview for our newsletter in our senior building. We attend our granddaughters' softball and basketball games. I knit about 120 hats each year for needy kids and donate them to shelters. Larry and I sing in two choirs. Our 80 member Crescendo chorus performed Kay's honorary piece "Wild and Precious" in March. The lyrics echo the last line of a poem by Mary Oliver which ends with "What will you do with your one wild and precious life?"

I've never stopped being involved in Japan. It influenced our family life immensely-- both my husband and kids — and now my granddaughter is going to Japanese language camp this summer.

**Thank you for all you have done for KC and KCC-JEE. We appreciate you and admire how much you have done and continue to do with your 'one wild and precious life!'**

By Angie Gaspar, Interviewer

**Meet Our New Newsletter Committee Member: Sarah Vrtiska**

Hello! My name is Sarah Vrtiska and I am a former Gottschalk teacher from the years 2021 to 2023. The start of my term was a bit unusual due to the pandemic; however, I have many fond memories from working at Kobe College, and I remain grateful for all that I learned in working alongside the wonderful teachers and students there.

I began helping out with the KCC-JEE newsletter this last spring, and I am thankful to KCC-JEE for this opportunity not only to stay connected to Kobe College, but to be able to support this community and the mission of this organization to promote cultural understanding between Japan and the United States.

***KCC's Archival Materials Will Go to the University of Chicago***

Our archival materials, which we had in our office until last year, will soon be stored at the University of Chicago. With over a hundred years of history and as one of the oldest U.S.-Japan collaborative organizations in America, our materials could be valuable resources for researchers. Therefore, the University of Chicago is excited to receive our materials and to make them available to the public. This is not the first time KCC has had a connection to the university. The second president of KCC, Shailer Mathews, was a leading scholar at the University of Chicago. Additionally, among the people who were involved with KCC in the early years, many were from Hyde Park, the neighborhood where the University of Chicago is located.

The University of Chicago also wanted to receive many of the books from our office. The books will be incorporated into their collection and made available to the public as well. As we learn more details, we will share how you might have access to the materials.



**KCC-JEE**  
**Kobe College Corporation**  
**Japan Education Exchange**  
5 Revere Drive, Suite 200 - #0024  
Northbrook, IL 60062

Fall 2024, Vol. 23



# Newsletter

Kobe College Corporation Japan Education Exchange