

Kobe College Corporation
Japan Education Exchange

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Kobe College Corporation
Japan Education Exchange

Mission

To inspire positive relationships among Kobe College, Japan, and the United States by providing distinctive educational opportunities.

Vision

*Provide premier programs and services to enhance the participation of American and Japanese women and men in our global society.
Further, to continue our historical association with Kobe Jogakuin through mutual cooperation, recognizing a common interest in education and cross-cultural pursuits to empower faculty and student participation in a global society.*

Kobe College Corporation
Japan Education Exchange
Annual Report
April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

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Message from the Chancellor of Kobe College

Dr. Ken Ii

On behalf of Kobe College, I would like to extend our greetings to the 2025 Annual Meeting of KCC-JEE. I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for your support over the past 100 years. I pray for God's blessings upon you and your activities.

This year, we celebrate our 150th anniversary. We are able to share this joy thanks to the participation and dedication of many people. We would also like to take this opportunity to give our thanks for God's guidance.

The Junior and Senior High School students are actively engaged in activities both inside and outside of school. They have received awards in various contests across academic fields, volunteer activities, sports, and traditional culture. It is our pleasure to support students who have high academic abilities and are also active in areas other than learning.

In the College, the number of students enrolled has reached approximately 95% of our capacity this year. I imagine that the restrictions on public relations activities for students during the pandemic caused a decrease in enrollment and raised concerns for you, but from the 2024 academic year, we have seen a recovery trend. We believe this is due to the reorganization of the faculty, improvements in the learning environment, and innovations in the entrance examination system. We will strive to further deepen this trend.

In Japan, some women's colleges have become coeducational while others have closed. In Hyogo Prefecture, where Kobe College is located, there will be only three women's colleges by 2027. Many of them are taking those actions due to various issues, but we have decided to develop our original mission of women's education.

As part of our 150th anniversary commemorative project, we are advancing campus improvements. We will hold a commemorative ceremony in October of this year and by that time repair work of the Main Gate and construction of the new school buildings on the west side will be well underway. We are grateful and delighted that a new chapter in the history of Kobe College is beginning. In addition, at the commemorative ceremony, a piece arranged by a young graduate who received the Hannah Gulick Suehiro Scholarship will be performed. We hope this will bring joy to you.

In April of this year, the Private School Law was revised, and Kobe College's Constitution (Kifukoi) was also changed. Accordingly, I completed my two-term tenure as Chairperson in June and stepped down, and Dr. Koichi Tateishi, professor of the Faculty of International Studies, was appointed as the new Chairperson. We look forward to continuing our good relationship with you in the future.

Message from the President
Dr. Yuki Ohigashi

We are grateful for your continued support for the mission of Kobe College Corporation – Japan Education Exchange (KCC-JEE). Your precious gifts allow us to continue our programs. I hope this annual report communicates to you what your investment is producing.

Last fiscal year, our Board of Directors were busy reviewing the amendment of the Constitution of Kobe College (KC). The Private School Act in Japan was revised and is in effect as of April 2025. The intention of the Amendment of the Private School Act is to strengthen the governance of school management and to enhance the transparency and checks-and-balances of different parties, including Trustees, Councilors and Auditors. Private schools in Japan were required to review their constitutions and make changes accordingly. Because KCC is a constitutional partner, along with Megumi-kai (the alumni association of KC), KC's Constitution states that they are to seek our opinions when revisions are made to their Constitution. The Board of Directors spent many hours reviewing the draft of revised Constitution, held a special board meeting, and sent KC our opinions, addressing some concerns we had. Our opinion letter to KC is available to any KCC members by contacting our office.

The educational environment surrounding KC is challenging due to lower birthrates and a declining interest in women-only schools and liberal arts education, some of which are true in the U.S. as well. As KC celebrates their 150th anniversary in 2025, we hope to work with them in planning the role of KC in today's Japan, and in the global society.

KCC is continuing to organize its historical documents by digitizing them. As reported last year, the originals of our historical documents have been donated to the University of Chicago's library. Our hope is that these documents will be available to many researchers and others who find our long history and our relationship with KC interesting.

We encourage you to follow our announcements and activities on our website (<https://www.kccjee.org/>) and leave comments. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Again, thank you for your generous support in many forms. If you would like to find out how to become more involved, by serving on a committee, helping us with technological needs, writing articles for our newsletter, for example, please contact our office. We are grateful for your partnerships.

Yuki Ohigashi
President, KCC-JEE

Vice President of Finance & Treasurer
Ken Tornheim

KCC-JEE's financial position increased during fiscal year ended March 31, 2025, with an increase in its net assets of approximately \$24,000. As shown in the summarized financial results on page 5, the Organization had an overall investment gain for the year of approximately \$267,000. The Organization ended the fiscal year with a net asset balance of approximately \$4.6 million. The Organization's investment portfolio has had a strong performance for the last two fiscal years. The Organization remains reliant on strong stock market results in order to generate an increase in its net assets while maintaining its program at the current level. Although the Organization's investment portfolio is diversified to protect the overall value from significant volatility in the markets, the Finance Committee continues to monitor its performance. The Organization remains in a healthy financial position to continue its programs without interruption.

The Organization once again satisfied its 5% distribution rule as a private non-operating foundation whereby it must distribute 5% of the value of the net investment assets annually in the form of program and certain eligible administrative expenses.

The Organization received total contributions of approximately \$15,000 for the year. This includes approximately \$4,000 from KC graduates living in North America. We are most grateful for the generosity and support, which is essential for KCC-JEE to continue its programs and carry out its mission. Our most sincere "Thank you" to each and every supporter of the Organization.

The Organization's investment portfolio is managed by the investment management firm of William Blair. William Blair, founded in 1935 and based in Chicago, is a global investment banking and asset management firm. The Finance Committee has periodic meetings with the William Blair team as part of the ongoing monitoring of the investment portfolio.

To ensure future sustainability of the Organization, we remain committed to vigilant fiscal responsibility in both our spending on programs and administrative expenses while at the same time recognizing that future investment gains are not guaranteed. We as a Board will continue to exercise prudent investment policies with the intent, if possible, to produce long-term investment gains and have sufficient liquidity to appropriate funds for programs and other expenses.

KOBE COLLEGE CORPORATION-JAPAN EDUCATION EXCHANGE
SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL RESULTS

	Years ended March 31,			
	2025	2024	2023	2022
Revenue:				
Investment income (loss)	\$267,217	\$634,647	\$(314,104)	\$131,649
Contributions	15,264	15,771	14,887	17,039
Total revenue	282,481	650,418	(299,217)	148,688
Expenses:				
Programs	194,066	256,680	193,040	233,897
Management & general	61,039	66,874	75,866	57,390
Private Foundation taxes	3,500	2,500	5,079	1,571
Total expenses	258,605	326,054	273,985	292,858
Increase (decrease) in net assets	23,876	324,364	(573,202)	(144,170)
Net assets:				
Beginning of fiscal year	4,597,337	4,272,973	4,846,175	4,990,345
End of fiscal year	\$4,621,213	\$4,597,337	\$4,272,973	\$4,846,175

Vice President of Programs **Cindi SturtzSreetharan**

The KCC-JEE Programs —Bryant Drake Guest Professorship, High School Essay Contest, Gottschalk Teacher, and Graduate Fellowship— had a successful year. In our current global climate, we remain undeterred in our commitment to providing high quality and unique programs that foster cross cultural understanding and appreciation for shared humanity.

Below you will find details of each Program. In brief summary, the Bryant Drake Guest Professor Program underwent evaluation, the High School Essay Contest selected a winning essay (Emma Taylor of Virginia) out of many excellent submissions, the Gottschalk Teacher Program successfully recruited one English teacher (Mr. Adetomiwa Oluwaseyi Ibukun Adesokan), and the Graduate Fellowship bid farewell to (now) Dr John Ostermiller (University of Nevada, Reno) and welcomed doctoral candidate Lena Paulsen (University of Minnesota) who began her research in affiliation with Kobe College in fall 2024.

We are grateful to the support that we receive for the KCCJEE Programs. We cherish our close relationship and collaboration with Kobe College that make the Programs possible.

High School Essay Contest **Submitted by Cindi SturtzSreetharan**

The High School Essay Contest received 22 submissions representing 9 different states. Ultimately, Emma Taylor of Virginia was selected as the 2025 Essay Contest winner. Emma began studying Japanese on her own before taking Japanese language classes at her high school. Emma will study at Genki Japanese & Culture School in Kyoto as well as do a homestay.

In October we will publish the High School essay prompt on the KCC-JEE website. Please encourage any high school students studying Japanese to think about submitting an essay. To be eligible, the applicant must be at least 16 years old by July 1, 2026.



*2025 High School Essay
Contest Winner Emma Taylor*

Gottschalk Teacher Program Report **Submitted by Elizabeth Hartung-Cole**

The Gottschalk Teacher (GT) committee recruits, screens, and recommends high-quality English-speaking teachers for full-time teaching positions at Kobe College Junior and Senior High School (KCHS). The GTs also actively work with students in extracurricular events including English Clubs, local/national speech contests, Cultural Festival, and school trips. These efforts greatly contribute to school's well-earned national reputation for excellence, especially in English.

The 2024 Committee welcomed two new members associated with KCHS: Erin Choi (a former Gottschalk Teacher) and Linda Gosselin (a former missionary teacher). Abbi Mayland, Toyoko Kodama and I were extremely grateful for their valuable time and expertise in helping us be successful.

The 2024 GT summer recruitment for one teacher for a contract from April 2025 through March 2027 received fifty-three applications. The committee screened the initial documents which include an essay, transcripts, and teaching experience. Based on the previous year's committee recommendations, we made two modifications to the process. First, we changed the essay prompt to a topic which would be less likely to be influenced by artificial intelligence. Secondly, instead of a zoom interview of each semi-finalist, we required each to submit a recorded short self-video answering given prompts. This modification reduced the difficulties of scheduling sixteen zoom calls from a vast array of time zones and gave each committee member a more manageable way to evaluate all the videos at times which fit into their work/life schedules. The results of both modifications were positive.

In October, we were pleased to learn that Kobe College offered the contract to Mr. Adetomiwa Oluwaseyi Ibukun Adesokan, highly recommended by the committee, who accepted the offer. Adetomiwa Oluwaseyi Ibukun Adesokan has a B.A. in English and secondary education from Salisbury University, Maryland and a secondary teaching credential from the state of Maryland. He has taught in Maryland public schools for five years and in the JET program in Shizuoka for two years. He is deeply interested in Japanese culture and language. He is very professional and kind with a delightful sense of humor. He looks forward to sharing not only his own American culture but also his Nigerian cultural background to help students learn about a variety of other cultures.



*Mr. Adetomiwa Oluwaseyi
Ibukun Adesokan*

The Gottschalk Teacher Program deeply values the on-going support we receive in several ways from former teachers, students, Rockford College, committee members, the KCC-JEE office administration, designated donations, and all others who help this cross-cultural educational endeavor. We hope to be able to fund this program for many years to come with your generous assistance.

Bryant Drake Guest Professorship Submitted by Cindi SturtzSreetharan

This past year was an off-cycle of the BDGP and we look forward to recruiting the next BDGP to begin in April 2026.

During 2024 – 2025, under the leadership of Board Member Toyoko Kodama and in conjunction with Kobe College, the Bryant Drake Guest Professor Program was evaluated. We learned that the Program provides unique opportunities for learning and collaboration among Kobe College staff, students, and faculty as well as to the visiting professor. We also came to understand the

challenges that arise for all people involved in these kinds of programs. We remain deeply committed to the BDGP and the opportunity to contribute to building cross cultural understandings and empathy.

KCC-JEE Graduate Fellowship Program

Submitted by Liv Coleman

Relevance to the Mission

The Graduate Fellowship Program is a nationally distinctive fellowship program awarding one fellowship valued at \$30,000 per year for doctoral dissertation research in Japan. Applicants are selected through a competitive application process. Graduate Fellows may select Kobe College as a research affiliation site and several fellows have done so. All Graduate Fellows make a research presentation at Kobe College during their time in Japan. Graduate Fellows make contributions to the US-Japan relationship and intercultural understanding not only through their intellectual research contributions, but also through their career development into college and university educators about Japan, bringing their specialized knowledge of Japan to generations of students and the public audiences around their universities.

Efficiency

The Graduate Fellowship Program operates within the allocated budget. For transparency and efficiency purposes, the program publicizes due dates for applications, advertises the program widely, and communicates the names and project titles of fellowship winners. We also receive a mid-year report from the fellowship winner each year to hear about their research progress in Japan. We ask that Graduate Fellows who publish research based on their work funded by this fellowship include a statement mentioning our support in their publication.

Outcomes

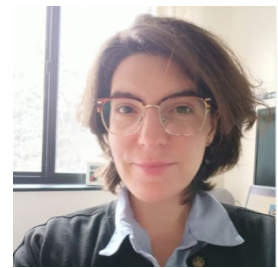
The Graduate Fellowship Program facilitates research in Japanese Studies that in many cases simply may not otherwise be possible, given the relatively small number of opportunities available for doctoral students to apply for funds supporting international travel and research abroad. This kind of financial support for doctoral research in Japan launches careers in Japanese Studies that last lifetimes and offers funds for which there are no ready substitutes. The knowledge gained, new scholarship generated, and professional networks built are the very backbone on which US-Japan relations are built at the level of civil society. Graduate Fellows frequently report that KCC-JEE Graduate Fellowship support is career-making and life-affirming.

Sustainability

The Graduate Fellowship Program's fundraising is part of the overall fundraising program of the KCC-Japan Education Exchange. The program is also open to earmarked contributions from those who want to ensure its future. To ensure the sustained quality of our program and make sure it works as smoothly as possible, the program seeks feedback from Graduate Fellowship recipients through their mid-year progress reports to the organization and by open email communication with fellows throughout the year about how the travel arrangements and research experience are going. Fellows are often invited back to KCC-JEE events to give presentations on their research and chat about their experiences as well.

Current (and Past) Graduate Fellowship Recipients

Our current 2024-2025 Graduate Fellow is Ms. Elena ("Lena") Paulsen, a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at the University of Minnesota. Her project is titled, "Shojo Modernity: Queer Girlhood and Tuberculosis in Early Twentieth Century Japan," and she is affiliated with Kobe College.



*2024-2025 Graduate Fellow
Lena Paulsen*



We were pleased to award the 2025-2026 Graduate Fellowship to Mr. Zane Casimir, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Visual Studies at UC-Irvine. His project is titled, "Play by Play: Ludic Spaces, Interventions, and Media within 20th Century Japanese Visual Cultures," and he will be affiliated with the University of Tokyo. The project sits at the intersection of play studies and art history and examines how the human activity of play in Japan is related to modernization, Modernism, and Postmodernism in visual culture.

*2025-2026 Graduate Fellow
Zane Casimir*

Finally, we are happy to announce that 2022-2023 Graduate Fellow Dr Lillian Tsay is an assistant professor of Japanese history at the University of Montreal from July 2025.



*2022-2023 Graduate Fellow
Dr Lillian Tsay*

Vice President of Administration
Tami Mizuno

1. KCC-JEE The 104th Anniversary celebration in 2024

We had a 104th Annual Meeting by Zoom on September 21st, 2024, with attendees from both the US and Japan. We appreciate the support of KCC-JEE family members and value our relationship of over 100 years.

2. Office Administrator

Ms. Kanae Takenaka has been working for many years providing virtual office support. She coordinates with various programs, provides job completions with maximized IT support, facilitates communication between Kobe College in Japan and KCC-JEE in the US, and manages additional responsibilities. KCC-JEE greatly appreciates Kanae's excellent work.

3. Insurance Coverage/ Commercial Package

In 2024, KCC-JEE provided the workers' compensation insurance policy for the employee in California.

Term: May 08, 2024 – May 08, 2025

TKM August 11, 2025

KCC-JEE Annual Donation Report for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025)

Dear KCC-JEE Members,

Thank you for your generous support during FY2025 (April 2024–March 2025)! Your contributions have made a significant impact on our mission to promote educational and cross-cultural opportunities between Japan and America. This year, we received a total of **\$15,265** in donations.

Donor Highlights:

- We are honored to have received a generous bequest from the family of Joyce Turner Hartman, a former missionary English teacher at Kobe College High School.
- 51% of the donations were designated for specific programs, including the Gottschalk Teacher Program and the Bryant Drake Guest Professorship Program, which received significant contributions.
- Our largest donor group was the Kobe College alumni, contributing 26% of the total donations.

Looking Ahead: As we plan for FY2026, we have set a donation goal of \$13,000. Your continued support will be invaluable in helping us reach this goal and further our mission. You can contribute through the following methods:

1. **Give online:** Visit <https://www.kccjee.org/support>
2. **Send a check** to Kobe College Corporation Japan Education Exchange, 5 Revere Drive, Suite 200-#0024, Northbrook, IL 60062.

We encourage you to designate your gift to specific programs if you wish.

Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact us at office@kccjee.org. We are happy to discuss how your donations make a difference.

Thank you again for your generosity and commitment to KCC-JEE. We look forward to your continued support!

FY2025 Donor List

<u>Diamond \$1,000 -</u>					
Kent	Hartman*	(FT)	Marjorie	Kinsey	
Julia Vassar	Samson		Etsuko	Morris	
Audie	Bock		Yasuko	Sanborn	
Edward	Grant**		Ken	Tornheim	(BD)
<u>Gold \$500 - \$999</u>					
Lynn	Cohee		Junko	Funaki	(FT)
Yutaka	Miyamoto	(FT)			
<u>Silver \$101 - \$499</u>					
Elizabeth	Hartung-Cole	(BD)	Sachiko	Matsumoto	
Tami	Mizuno	(BD)	Angela	Gaspar	(BD)
Makiko	Taya		Mayumi	Naramura	
Terumi	Joki		Miki	Radack	
Eric	Fulcomer		Manami	Kobayashi	
Liv	Coleman	(BD)	Abbi	Mayland	(BD)
Cindi	SturtzSreetharan	(BD)	Yuki	Ohigashi	(BD)
Reiko	Horai		Carol	Edmonds	
Mika	Iwano	(FT)	Takako	Koplin	
Hiroko	Nishimura		Randall	Smith	
Victor	Strandberg		Yuriko	Yanagisawa	
Machiko	Yamaguchi***		Noriko	Yoneji	
Randall	Smith				
<u>Bronze - \$100</u>					
David	Janes	(BD)	Seiko	Okada	(BD)
Staci	Ambrose		Kyoko	Sagawa	
Kyoko	Kimura		Elizabeth	Pexton	
Mutsumi	Moteki		Cynthia	Beherens	
Chiaki	Nakajima	(BD)			

Legends:

* Bequest- family of Joyce Turner Hartman

** in honor of Yuki Ohigashi & Toyoko Kodama

*** in memory of mother, an alumna of KC

(BD) KCC-JEE Board Members 2024-2025

(FT) First Time Donor

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

2024-2025

OFFICERS

Dr. Yuki Ohigashi (2013-) President
Ken Tornheim (2012-) Vice President, Finance & Treasurer
Tami Mizuno (2014-) Vice President, Administration & Secretary
Dr. Cindi SturtzSreetharan (2003-2008, 2012-) Vice President, Programs

DIRECTORS

Dr. Liv Coleman (2019-)
Angela Gaspar (2006-)
Elizabeth Hartung-Cole (2018-)
Dr. David P. Janes (2024-)
Toyoko Kodama (2019-)
Abbi Mayland (2019-)
Dr. Seiko Okada (2024-)
Go Sugiura (2007-)
Dr. Roberta Wollons (1997-)

HONORARY MEMBERS

Sue Doffing
Masaru Funai
Natsuko Furuya
Dr. Pat Gottschalk
Dr. Marnie Jorenby
Marjorie Kinsey
Jeanne Sokolowski
Dave Therkelsen
Nancy Waichler
Fumiyo Young



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