

Kobe College Corporation
Japan Education Exchange

ANNUAL REPORT 2026



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.

(6/2019)

Kobe College Corporation
Japan Education Exchange
Annual Report
April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026

Table of Contents

1.....	Table of Contents
2.....	Message from the Chancellor
3.....	Message from the President
4-5.....	Vice President of Finance & Treasurer, Financial Results Ken Tornheim
6-9.....	Vice President of Programs Dr. Cindi SturtzSreetharan
	High School Essay Contest Report Angie Gaspar, Chair
	Gottschalk Teachers Report Elizabeth Hartung-Cole, Co-Chair
	Bryant Drake Guest Professorship Report Dr. Cindi SturtzSreetharan, Chair
	Graduate Fellowship Report Dr. Liv Coleman, Chair
10.....	Vice President of Administration Tami Mizuno
11-12.....	Development Report List of Donors
13.....	Officers and Directors 2025-2026

Message from the Chancellor of Kobe College
Dr. Keiichi Nakano

On behalf of Kobe College, I would like to extend our greetings to the 2026 Annual Meeting of KCC-JEE.

I assumed the position of Chancellor in April 2026, succeeding Dr. Ken Ii. Joining Kobe College in 2010 as a faculty member in the Department of Inter-Cultural Studies and a chaplain, I have served as President of Kobe College since 2021. This year, I have also taken on the responsibilities of Chancellor, President, and Senior Chaplain.

Before coming to Kobe College, I served as a church pastor and a chaplain/teacher at other educational institutions. I also served from 1994 to 1999 as pastor of the Japanese-language ministry at Sycamore Congregational Church, U.C.C., in El Cerrito, California. North America therefore holds many fond memories for me.

As you know, Kobe College celebrated its 150th anniversary last year. We are deeply grateful for your generous support that made our commemorative events and projects possible. Carrying on the passionate aspirations of our predecessors, we remain committed to providing an excellent education for future generations. We ask for your continued support in the future.

Our Junior and Senior High School continues to thrive, and its graduates who excel both academically and in character are making valuable contributions in many fields. At our college, while declining birthrate and shifting student preferences for co-educational institutions, enrollment has recovered to a level close to the target capacity through initiatives such as departmental reorganization, entrance examination system reforms, and enhancement of scholarship programs.

At a time when many women's universities across Japan are becoming co-educational, Kobe College remains committed to its mission as a women's institution. Unconscious bias still exists in Japanese society, and there are still challenges to achieving true gender equality. In such a society, we are confident that the experience of learning and growing "in your own way" in an all-female environment will lead to great confidence in the future.

Especially in these challenging times, your prayers and support are a great source of encouragement and joy for all who study and work at Kobe College. We sincerely ask for your continued partnership as we strengthen and enrich our educational mission.

We will pray for God's blessing on you all the KCC-JEE members. Thank you very much.

Message from the President
Dr. Yuki Ohigashi

Thank you for your support for the mission of Kobe College Corporation – Japan Education Exchange (KCC-JEE). Your financial gifts and your involvement as volunteers and participants allow us to continue our programs. May the reports in this annual report give you joy.

Last fiscal year (April 2025-March 2026), we finally finished our big project to digitize our archival materials that have been in our office and storage for the past few years. The original materials have been shipped to the University of Chicago, where they will be available not just for us, but for the public! We hope they will be used by many researchers as well. Many of the materials will be available in digital format also.

In September, we held our board meeting in Minneapolis, MN, where we were joined by many honorary board members. We also held a reception to thank our partners. Some have been host-families of students from Kobe College (KC) and Kobe College High School (KCHS). It was such a delight to hear their memories with the students and about their continued relationships. It was also wonderful to reconnect with a former missionary teacher of KCHS.

Another highlight as an organization was celebrating Kobe Jogakuin's 150th anniversary. As a constitutional partner of the school, it was an honor to be a part of such a monumental occasion. Eleven of us, including relatives of Ms. Julia Dudley, a founding missionary of the school, and relatives of Dr. Charlotte DeForest, the founder of KCC, went to the Kobe Jogakuin campus in Nishinomiya, Japan to attend the ceremony in October.

I hope you will enjoy reading what happened at KCC-JEE last year. We would like to encourage you to follow our announcements and activities on our website (<https://www.kccjee.org/>), where you can leave comments. You can also follow us on Facebook.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow board members and committee members for their dedicated volunteer work for the organization.

Yuki Ohigashi
President, KCC-JEE

Vice President of Finance & Treasurer
Ken Tornheim

KCC-JEE's financial position increased during the fiscal year ended March 31, 2026, with an increase in its net assets of approximately \$36,000. As shown in the summarized financial results on page 5, the Organization had an overall investment gain for the year of approximately \$295,000. The Organization ended the fiscal year with a net asset balance of approximately \$4.7 million. The Organization's investment portfolio had a strong performance for the last three 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 in order 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 \$31,000 for the year. This includes approximately \$5,000 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 recognize 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 program and other expenses.

KOBE COLLEGE CORPORATION-JAPAN EDUCATION EXCHANGE
SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL RESULTS

	Years ended March 31,			
	2026	2025	2024	2023
Revenue:				
Investment income (loss)	\$ 295,382	\$ 267,217	\$ 634,647	\$ (314,104)
Contributions	31,225	15,264	15,771	14,887
Miscellaneous	3,914			
Total revenue	330,521	282,481	650,418	(299,217)
Expenses:				
Programs	206,760	194,066	256,680	193,040
Management & general	84,255	61,039	66,874	75,866
Private Foundation taxes	3,324	3,500	2,500	5,079
Total expenses	294,339	258,605	326,054	273,985
Increase (decrease) in net assets	36,182	23,876	324,364	(573,202)
Net assets:				
Beginning of fiscal year	4,621,213	4,597,337	4,272,973	4,846,175
End of fiscal year	\$ 4,657,395	\$ 4,621,213	\$ 4,597,337	\$ 4,272,973

Vice President of Programs **Cindi SturtzSreetharan**

The KCC-JEE Programs—the Bryant Drake Guest Professorship, the High School Essay Contest, the Gottschalk Teacher, and the Graduate Fellowship—enjoyed a successful year. We remain steadfast in our commitment to offering high-quality, distinctive programs that promote cross-cultural understanding and shared appreciation across cultures.

Details of each Program appear below. To summarize briefly: the Bryant Drake Guest Professor Program recruited a visiting scholar (Dr. Ariel Genadt) for the new program in Architecture; the High School Essay Contest selected a winning essayist (Atticus Lee of Washington) from among many strong submissions; the Gottschalk Teacher Program successfully brought on one English teacher (Ms. Arielle Fiona Aliwalis); and the Graduate Fellowship bid farewell to Lena Paulsen (University of Minnesota) while welcoming doctoral candidate Mr. Zane Casimir (University of California, Irvine), who began their research in affiliation with the University of Tokyo in fall 2025.

We are thankful for the support we receive for the KCCJEE Programs. We treasure our close relationship and collaboration with Kobe College, which make these Programs possible.

High School Essay Contest **Submitted by Angie Gaspar**



The KCC-JEE High School Essay Contest received 40 submissions representing 12 different states. Atticus Lee from Washington was selected as the 2026 Essay Contest winner. He has been studying Japanese for two years. In his spare time, he enjoys dancing, fashion, bodybuilding, and cooking. He will study at Genki Japanese & Culture School in Kyoto and stay with a Japanese family.

2026 High School Essay Contest Winner
Atticus Lee

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 the school's well-earned national reputation for excellence, especially in English. The 2025 Committee welcomed two new members with strong ties to KCHS: Seiko Okada (a former KCHS student) and Sarah Vrtiska (a former Gottschalk Teacher). Abbi Mayland, Linda Gosselin and I were extremely grateful for their time and expertise in the recruitment process.

The 2025 GT summer recruitment for one teacher for a contract from April 2026 through March 2028 received seventy-two applications, fifteen of which were disqualified for being incomplete and/or for grammatical errors in the essay. The remaining fifty-seven applications were evaluated in three stages:

- First stage: the committee screened the initial documents which included college degree(s), transcripts, teaching experience, a short essay, and multicultural experience. The committee chose fourteen semi-finalists (although three decided not to continue).
- Second stage: after evaluating and discussing the semi-finalists' self-videos, the committee decided upon five finalists.
- Third stage: each finalist was interviewed (via Zoom) by two committee members using scripted (and legal) questions. Then each finalist conducted a demonstration lesson and reflected upon the experience. The committee members discussed the results and how to rank the finalists (*highly recommended*, *recommended*, or *recommended with reservations*). Each member then wrote up a short summary of their observations for each candidate (also submitted to KCHS). This stage was recorded and sent to KCHS with all the other material (including references, background checks, and social media content).

Upon reflecting on the year's recruitment process, the committee recommended changing the self-videos to 10 minutes and that future instructions for the Demonstration Lesson should state that the lesson be aimed towards low-intermediate or mid-intermediate level English proficiencies.



*Ms. Arielle Fiona
Aliwalis*

In October, we were pleased to learn that Kobe College offered the contract to Ms. Arielle Fiona Aliwalis. She has a BA in Secondary Education/English and an MA in Language and Literature from universities in the Philippines. She has taught English in secondary schools in the Philippines for 6 years and for two years at a college in the Philippines. She is energetic, personable and has excellent references. Her demonstration lesson was engaging and enjoyable.

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

The Bryant Drake Guest Professorship recruited for a one-year appointment in the new program in Architecture in the [Department of Life and Environmental Sciences](#) within the School of Life and Environmental Sciences.

The Architecture Program sought someone who specializes in the history of Japanese Architecture with particular interest in finding someone doing fieldwork in the history of Architecture in Japan. The BDGP committee vetted applications in the fall and ultimately recommended Dr. Ariel Genadt to Kobe College.



Dr. Ariel Genadt completed his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania in 2016, working under Professors David Leatherbarrow and Kenneth Frampton. Over fifteen years, he has taught graduate and undergraduate courses at Penn, Swarthmore College, and other institutions, covering modern architecture, Japanese architecture and urbanism (17th–21st century), theories of bioclimatic architecture and resilience, and the expressive and environmental dimensions of building envelopes. In 2012, he served as a JSPS visiting scholar at the Kengo Kuma Lab at Tokyo University, where he led a design-build workshop.

His scholarship examines the relationships between construction technology, sustainability, and architectural expression across cultures. A central focus is how Japanese architects have reinterpreted local practices to address social resilience, work reflected in peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, conference papers, and a forthcoming monograph, *The Art of Yielding – Public Architectures of Resilience in Japan Since 1945*. A parallel research strand addresses historical and contemporary bioclimatic architecture and how design responds to climatic and social contexts, the subject of a collaborative book project.

His teaching emphasizes critical inquiry, intercultural awareness, and sustainable design, drawing on professional practice across four continents to bridge theory and design.

Graduate Fellowship Committee

Submitted by Liv Coleman

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. We advertise the fellowship widely, receive applications according to a published schedule, and make award decisions in April each year. 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.

Our current 2025-2026 Graduate Fellow is 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.

We were pleased to award the 2026-2027 Graduate Fellowship award to Madison Archer-Morrison, a Ph.D. candidate in Musicology at Ohio State University. Madison is studying Japanese video game music communities, with a project titled, “For the Love of the Game: Cultural Memory, Musicality, and Transnational Community Formation in Japanese Dōjin Creative Spaces.” Madison will be affiliated with Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto.

Ms. Madison Archer-Morrison



And, a quick update about our 2021-2022 Graduate Fellow, Dr Dylan Hallingstad O'Brien (UC San Diego, 2025). He is currently a lecturer at Temple University Japan, Tokyo Campus.

*Dr. Dylan Hallingstad
O'Brien*

Vice President of Administration
Tami Mizuno

1. KCC-JEE 105th Anniversary Celebration in 2025

KCC-JEE held its 105th Annual Meeting via Zoom on September 19, 2025, with participants joining from both the United States and Japan.

We greatly appreciate the continued support of the entire KCC-JEE family and the strong relationships that have been maintained for more than 100 years.

2. KCC-JEE Board Meetings

KCC-JEE held the following Board Meetings:

- **June 9, 2025** — via Zoom
- **September 6, 2025** — Minneapolis, Minnesota
- **December 18, 2025** — via Zoom
- **March 7, 2026** — Chicago, Illinois

3. Partner Appreciation Reception

KCC-JEE held a Partner Appreciation Reception at the Courtyard Marriott Minneapolis Downtown on September 6, 2025.

4. Kobe College 150th Anniversary Celebration

Some KCC-JEE members attended Kobe College's 150th Anniversary Celebration in Kobe, Japan, on October 12, 2025.

5. Administration / Office Manager

Ms. Kanae Takenaka has served KCC-JEE for many years as Office Manager, working remotely through our virtual office.

She coordinates various programs, provides IT and network support, facilitates communication between Kobe College in Japan and KCC-JEE in the United States, and handles a wide range of additional administrative responsibilities.

KCC-JEE greatly appreciates Kanae's dedicated service and excellent work. In September 2025, we recognized her **10 years of service** with an anniversary gift.

6. Insurance Coverage / Commercial Package

KCC-JEE maintained Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage in California through Gallagher.

Policy Term: May 8, 2025 – May 8, 2026

KCC-JEE Annual Donation Report for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY2026)

Submitted by Yuki Ohigashi

Dear KCC-JEE Members,

We are grateful for your generous support during FY2026 (April 2025-March 2026). Your contributions allow us to continue our mission to promote educational and cross-cultural opportunities between Japan and America, as well as supporting Kobe Jogakuin. This year, we received a total of **\$31,224** in donations, which surpassed our goal of \$13,000.

Donation Highlights for FY2026:

- There were 49 giving units, including 6 first-time donations.
- Donor categories
 - KC alumni – 25
 - Former board members – 6
 - Others include former program participants, families of KC alumni and board members, and the current board members
- Designated gifts
 - Bryant Drake Guest Professorship - \$714
 - Gottschalk Teacher - \$3433
 - Essay Contest - \$350
 - Graduate Fellowship - \$250
 - Suehiro Music Scholarship - \$53
- We also acknowledge gifts given in memory/honor of individuals
 - In memory of Fumiko Satoda (KC alumna) by Ikuko Satoda Sullivan
 - In memory of mother by Michiko Yamaguchi
 - In honor of Toyoko Kodama and Yuki Ohigashi by Edward Grant

Looking Ahead: As we plan for FY2027, 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/donate>
2. **Send a check** to Kobe College Corporation Japan Education Exchange, 5 Revere Drive, Suite 200-#0024, Northbrook, IL 60062. (Please contact the office for this option.)

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

Questions?

Please don't hesitate to contact us at office@kccjee.org. We're 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!

FY2026 Donor List

Diamond \$1,000 -

Edward	Grant*	Nancy	Rostowsky	(FT)
Marjorie	Kinsey	Yasuko	Sanborn	
Etsuko	Morris	Ken	Tornheim	(BD)
Dick	Niemiec	Julia	Vassar Samson	

Gold \$500 - \$999

Lynn	Cohee	Ikuko	Satoda Sullivan**	(FT)
Elizabeth	Hartung-Cole	(BD)		

Silver \$100 - \$499

Charlotte	Alexandre	Tami	Mizuno	(BD)
Staci	Ambrose	Maryumi	Naramura	
Mari	Arakawa Alexander	Hiroko	Nishimura	
Liv	Coleman	Yuki	Ohigashi	(BD)
Carol	Edmonds	Seiko	Okada	(BD)
Angela	Gaspar	Miki	Radack	
Reiko	Horai	James	Randall Smith	
Yuko	Ishimori	Kyoko	Sagawa	
Mika	Ito	Cindi	SturtzSreetharan	(BD)
Mika	Iwano	Go	Sugiura	(BD)
Terumi	Joki	Makiko	Taya	
Manami	Kobayashi	Roberta	Wollons	(BD)
Takako	Koplin	Michiko	Yamaguchi***	
Sachiko	Matsumoto	Yuriko	Yanagisawa	
Abbi	Mayland	Noriko	Yoneji	

Bronze Under \$100

Cynthia	Behrens	Toyoko	Kodama	(BD)
Yumiko	Fujino	Mutumi	Moteki	
David	Janes	Elizabeth	Pexton	
Kyoko	Kimura	Ritsuko	Taketani	(FT)

Legends:

* in honor of Yuki Ohigashi & Toyoko Kodama

** in memory of Fumiko Satoda, an alumna of KC

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

(BD) KCC-JEE Board Members 2025-2026

(FT) First Time Donor

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

2025-2026

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
Dr. Marjorie Kinsey
Richard Niemiec
Nancy Rostowsky
Jeanne Sokolowski
Dave Therkelsen
Nancy Waichler
Fumiyo Young



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