



# The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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★Celebrating 15 years★

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*"Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten."*

—B.F. Skinner

## From the School Director

This year marks 15 years since the foundation of K. International School Tokyo and the first time a class, which included my own son, progressed all the way from K1 to Grade 12. Looking back, I am invigorated by our many achievements, but am also reminded of the importance each year and the responsibility that we have each day towards our children's education. I am determined to continue carrying out my duties while always remembering the school's founding vision.

As you know, KIST is currently undergoing various reforms to return the school to its founding vision.

This June, we introduced our new school song which I hope offers another way to express the KIST philosophy to the whole community.

### For Tomorrow

Never forget that all through time  
We make the future together  
Side by side, hand in hand  
Building a better world for tomorrow

どんなときも わすれないで  
未来は皆で 作ってくよ  
輝く未来 築くために  
あしたに向かい 歩こうよ

We are all sharing the earth  
We're not alone  
Neighbors and friends helping us learn  
All through our lives

人や自然に ささえられ  
私たちは 生きてる

Anytime you see someone who is in need  
Just stop and think what help we can give  
Just trust in yourself, believe in yourself  
And you can change the world  
For everyone

いつの日か 誰かのために  
何かができるかな  
誇りを持ち 生きてくために  
さあ未来へ  
For everyone

The message I would like to convey through this song is as follows:  
"Never forget that we are the ones who shape tomorrow, and as such, it is our duty to work together to ensure that peace prevails in the future. Just as we are supported by people and our environment, we must ensure that we help support others. If you support people and the environment, or are in some way able to help build a brighter future, you can take pride in your own life."

*Continued on next page*

### DATES TO REMEMBER



#### September 2012

- 17 School closed (National holiday)
- 18 (S/EIC) Field Day
- 19 (E) Field Day
- 19 (G1-G12) Clubs program begins
- 20 (G5) Camp explanation evening
- 21 MYP New parent information night
- 22 High school drama festival
- 25 (W) Free dress day
- 26-28 (G8) Camp
- 26 (PYP) New parent information session

#### October 2012

- 1-2 School photographs
- 3-5 (G5) Camp
- 5 World Teachers' Day
- 8 School day
- 9-11 (G3-G10/EIC) ISA testing
- 13 School explanation day
- 15 2013-2014 enrollment applications open
- 17 (G10) PSAT tests
- 19 KISTival preparation day (K1-G5) No school for students (S) School day
- 20 KISTival 2012
- 21-28 Autumn break
- 29 (W) School resumes

#### November 2012

- 2 Last day of quarter 1
- 2 (W) DEAR literary character dress-up day
- 2 (S/EIC) SRC dance
- 5/12/19/27 DEAR reading initiative

*Continued from previous page*

To improve the present state of turmoil in the world we need talented, caring individuals with a sense of responsibility. It is our hope to develop similarly minded young people at KIST who, working together, can contribute to society. As founders of the school, these were our thoughts when writing these lyrics.

Additionally, the composition for our school song, "For Tomorrow", was kindly provided by a member of our school community, the well-known musician, Tomoyasu Hotei, with English lyrics by Craig Larsen who was able to match our original thoughts with his English version. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you both for your contributions to the song.

I always listen to this song in my car on the way to work and am delighted whenever I pass a student in the corridor who I hear humming it. I hope that the whole school community can also take the time to listen to and familiarize themselves with our school song, "For Tomorrow".

Warm regards,

**Yoshishige Komaki**  
School Director/Head of School



*Mr Komaki*

## Welcome to New Staff

The new school year always brings a number of new faces to the KIST family from both within Japan and from overseas. On behalf of the school community, we would like to welcome our new staff and wish them all the best for a great year!

E-mail addresses for all faculty, both new and continuing, are available on the **Contact >> Faculty Directory** page of the school website.



*New teachers learning the art of Japanese cuisine under the direction of Japanese language staff.*



**Clay Bradley**  
Grade 3A



**Susan Hirakawa**  
Secondary English  
Language Support



**Robert Johnson**  
Lang. A English /  
College Guidance  
Counselor



**Julia Lupone**  
Grade 3B



**Lucila Zornosa-  
Sanchez**  
Grade 1B



**Chien-Hsuan Chen**  
Teacher's Assistant  
K2



**Anna Holdaway**  
Teacher's Assistant  
K3B



**John McDonough**  
Teacher's Assistant  
K2



**Aaron Ross**  
LEAP Instructor



**Yuki Tanabe**  
Bus Driver

## Elementary School News

Welcome back for the start of the 2012-2013 school year!

I hope you all had a wonderful and rewarding summer season and return to school refreshed and ready for an exciting school year, I know I am! I spent the summer travelling with my family around Japan and spending lots of time playing with my two sons. Finally having plenty of time to spend with them, I was reminded of the value of providing children with a variety of experiences. Every time we went somewhere or tried something new they would ask *what, why* and *how*? Every time their wonderings took us on an exploration or adventure that just seemed so natural and fun! As an adult I must also remind myself of that sense of wonder, and how magical it is for children.

Wonder and inquiry, they go hand in hand. This is one of the reasons why I have so much confidence in the IB Primary Years Programme. We allow students to question the world around them, test their own theories and put their learning into action. While we still put significant emphasis on skills and knowledge, combining them with this sense of wonder draws the students into their subjects and helps them to make connections to the world they live in.

As the new Elementary School Principal, I will strive to keep that wonder alive in our students and their inquiries!

Welcome back and I hope that you and your children also had some interesting explorations and adventures of your own!

All the best in 2012-2013!

**Kevin Yoshihara**  
Elementary School Principal



Mr Yoshihara

## KISTival 2012

The annual school festival, KISTival, will be held on **Saturday, October 20** from 10:00 to 3:00. Particular duties will be allocated to each grade level. We ask for the support of the entire school community in assisting with the preparation and running of the event to ensure that maximum funds are raised. On KISTival Preparation Day (Friday, October 19), all Elementary students from K1 to G5 have a day off; however, G6 to G12 students are required to assist with the preparations. Further information will be distributed soon.



## K1-K2 News

Welcome everyone! My name is Claire Yoneyama. I am the K1-K2 Team Leader and the K2 classroom teacher. The K1 and K2 children have settled in smoothly into their new classroom lives. In K1, there were a few tears in the mornings as it was their first time to be separated from their parents, but they have adjusted to their new surroundings well!



Mrs Yoneyama

A gradual entry program is implemented in the K1 class to help these little ones adjust to school life slowly. It is a two-week transition period where they



come for a couple of hours in the morning or afternoon during the first week. During the second week, the students come only in the morning

and go home with their parents after they finish their lunch. They start their normal school day during the third week.

The normal school day for K2 students is from 9:30 to 3:20; however, a lot of our K2 students come early from 8:30 and are supervised until school begins. The first two weeks is their transition period where they learn the rules and routines in the classroom. It is very important for the K2 students to learn from the beginning how to be responsible and independent.

The K1 and K2 classes are both beginning the new school year with their "Who we are" units of inquiry. K1 is exploring the different ways to learn with the support of those around them. This unit for the K2 class is a year-long unit. They learn about their bodies and their surroundings using their senses.

If you happen to pass by the K1 and K2 classrooms and meet some of the little ones, please don't hesitate to say 'Hello' to them and they will say 'Hello' back to you with a sweet smile!

**Claire Yoneyama**  
K1-K2 Team Leader, K2 Classroom Teacher



## PYP News

Welcome to the 2012-2013 school year! The new school year is off to a great start. Students were eager to come to school, see old friends and make new ones, and to see their new classroom and teacher. Students jumped right into some exciting learning – exploring new units of inquiry and inquiring into maths, literacy and more. This year promises to be a great one filled with new learning, discoveries and growth.

Already at the start of the year, students have been exhibiting the **learner profile**. The learner profile is a part of the IB curriculum that unites the PYP, MYP and DP. The learner profile aims to develop **thinkers, communicators, inquirers** and **risk-takers** who are **reflective, open-minded, balanced, principled, caring** and **knowledgeable**. The Elementary school promotes the learner profile in a variety of ways. One way is the 'Learner Profile of the Month'. Each month the Elementary School chooses a profile to put in the spotlight. This month we are all working on being **risk-takers**. You can support your child at home by modeling risk-taking and discussing what it means to you and to your child to be a risk-taker.



Learner profile awards are another way the Elementary School is promoting the learner profile. Students, parents and teachers can give and receive profile awards. The learner profile is alive and present in the Elementary School. Stop by the bulletin board in front of the Elementary Office to check who has demonstrated one of the profiles and received an award.

**On Wednesday, September 26 there will be a PYP Information night in the MPR at 6 p.m.** This information session is intended for parents new to the PYP and to those who would like a refresher on the PYP philosophies and curriculum. I hope to see you there!



**Elizabeth Heard**  
PYP Coordinator

*Ms Heard*

**"PYP New Parent Information Session"**  
**Wednesday, September 26**  
**6:00-7:00 | Multipurpose Room**

## ESRC

The Elementary Student Representative Council (ESRC) is up and running for 2012-2013. The ESRC is the student voice of the Elementary School and is responsible for helping to solve problems and make decisions.

The ESRC is composed of the Executive Committee which includes a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, made up of Grade 5 students, and a class representative from each class, K3 to Grade 4.

The ESRC meets each week to discuss important Elementary School issues. The class representatives and executives serve as the voice of their class and can bring items and problems to discuss at the ESRC meetings. Discussing recess rules and new playground equipment was the first order of business for the ESRC.

All of the ESRC members are enthusiastic and ready to help contribute to the Elementary community. It looks like it is going to be a productive year for the ESRC.



### Elementary SRC 2012-2013

#### Executive Committee

##### President

Goki (G5A)

##### Vice President

Shridhar (G5B)

##### Treasurer

Ushani (G5A)

##### Secretary

Katherine (G5B)

#### Class Representatives

Renzo (K3A) | Sophia (K3B)

Ethan (G1A) | Haruto (G1B)

Harunosuke (G2A) | Mai (G2B)

Hanna (G3A) | Kishore (G3B)

Hee Sung (G4A) | Ian (G4B)

## Secondary School News

### IT updates and K. OneNote

The 2012-13 academic year started very smoothly. This year we are moving further ahead with our long-term IT goals of greater integrated technology in the curriculum and digital literacy skills. We launched our 1-to-1 laptop initiative for Grades 10-12. Having students gain experience and expertise working with personal laptops before they graduate and attend college or university is essential for academic success. This initiative also greatly helps keep tuition costs down while providing greater access to laptops for Grades 6-9. For our younger secondary students, we encourage the use of school provided laptops to ensure a safer and productive learning environment which is more developmentally appropriate.

We are trialing a new student learning scaffold with our Grade 10-12 students. We are calling it 'K. OneNote'. This was introduced to all students bringing laptops to school in special IT sessions during the first week of school. This particular initiative is designed to provide a 'personal learning environment' (PLE), greatly helping with student organization. For G10 students we will be using an electronic process journal with the Personal Project to be introduced in the next few weeks. This is imbedded in K. OneNote. We will be using something similar with G11 students to help guide them through the Extended Essay. These journals can be shared with an advisor over the Internet, greatly improving dialogue between students and supervisors. For non PC users there is a web-based version, but Evernote or similar software may be a good alternative for our Mac friends. I highly encourage parents to discuss how your child is taking notes and keeping organized in all grade levels. As our K. OneNote is refined this academic year, we are considering making it available for all grade levels as it may be useful for students to use on their home computers.

### Parent Welcome Night

I would like to thank all families for attending. Based on parental feedback in previous years, we kept the gym-style rotation making it easier for parents to meet specific subject teachers. We will be using a similar set up for parent-teacher-student conferences on November 23. We have deliberately timed the 1st quarter reports to be issued on November 9 so that parents are better informed before the conferences. Not all parents may need to see each of their child's subject teachers. Teachers will arrange conferences with students they wish to see and parents will have the opportunity to do the same.

## PowerSchool

During Parent Welcome Night, more details about PowerSchool parental/student access was shared. We plan to allow access to PowerSchool at the beginning of November. This will allow parents and students to see assessment data as it is entered in teacher grade books. Having this sort of access will greatly help students know exactly what they need to work on for improvement, which will include attendance. We will roll this out to a small group of parents initially and then to all parents/students in the secondary school. More details to follow.

### The 2012-2013 timetable

Class Times:		Long Tuesdays:		Short Tuesdays:	
Homeroom	8:30 - 8:35	Homeroom	8:30 - 8:35	Homeroom	8:30 - 8:35
Block 1	8:40 - 10:05	Block 1	8:40 - 9:45	Block 1	8:40 - 9:45
Block 2	10:10 - 11:35	Block 2	9:50 - 10:55	Block 2	9:50 - 10:55
Lunch	11:35 - 12:20	Lunch	11:00 - 11:45	Lunch	11:00 - 11:45
Block 3	12:20 - 13:45	Block 3	11:45 - 12:50	Block 3	11:45 - 12:50
Break	13:45 - 14:00	Block 4	12:55 - 14:00	Break	12:50 - 13:00
Block 4	14:00 - 15:25	Break	14:00 - 14:15	Block 4	13:05 - 14:10
		Advisory	14:15 - 15:25		



Image from K. OneNote

### Important appeal for class parents

During Parent Night, each homeroom/advisory team put out an appeal for class parents. We had several parents offer to fulfill this role, but some homerooms still need parental representation. At the time of writing this article the following homerooms still need a kind parent to volunteer for this role: 6B, 7A, 7B, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B, 10A, 11A, 11B.

The parental role is vital in order to effect positive communication and relationships within our school community. More specifically, the role of class parents is designed primarily to support the organization of school events such as the KISTival. In addition to this role, class parents are asked to be available to support teachers with the supervision of class events such as field trips. As a school we will continue to reflect on this role in order to best meet the needs of our students and the school community. If you are able to assist, please email me directly at [stephen.rothkopf@kist.ed.jp](mailto:stephen.rothkopf@kist.ed.jp) and mention which specific grade/homeroom you are able to assist with.

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### Grade level trips

This year we have scheduled 3 trips similar to last year. Each trip is specifically designed to offer students unique activities that they could not take advantage of at school related to curriculum and designed to improve the learning environment when students return to school. All grade levels will be accompanied by their respective homeroom/advisory teachers wherever possible. More detailed information will be provided via KIST parental e-mail accounts, but please keep the following dates in mind:

- September 26-28 (Grade 8)
- November 8-9 (Grade 6) **Updated**
- March 6-8 (Grade 10)

As we embark on our 16th year, I am looking forward to working with our community to ensure another great year in the Secondary School.

Warm regards,

**Stephen Rothkopf**  
Secondary School Principal



*Mr Rothkopf*

## Explanation Day 2012

For the 2013 - 2014 school year

KIST will hold an Explanation Day for parents interested in enrolling children for the 2013 - 2014 school year.

Administration and teaching staff will be available to answer questions regarding admissions procedures, the school curriculum, progression to universities, and general features of the school. Visitors will also be able to view the school facilities.

**Date:**

October 13, 2012 (Saturday)

**Session times:**

- (1) English: 9:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- (2) Japanese: 1:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Reservations close:**

October 12, 2012 (Friday)

Reservations essential!

[www.kist.ed.jp](http://www.kist.ed.jp)

## MYP News

### Arts subject guide changes

The new school year brings excitement for students, parents and teachers. The Middle Years Programme (MYP) continues with developing further changes as part of the already published "MYP: The Next Chapter" document. As part of the announced changes, new MYP subject guides are being piloted all over the world. KIST art teachers are very proud of taking an active role in piloting the new Arts guide in this year's art classes in all MYP grade levels. During the school year our MYP art teachers are obligated to stay in contact with the IB headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands, and report of their experiences with the new subject guide. Feedback from schools piloting the new Arts guide (including KIST) will be taken into consideration when creating the final version of the guide which will be published in 2014. Having a new subject guide will ensure the use of the newest educational standards and developments.



### Training for future IB Japanese workshop leaders

KIST is active in local MYP developments. During the first week of this school year, three of our MYP teachers, Ms Kanazawa, Ms Johnston and Ms Yamashita, participated in the MYP training for future workshop leaders in the Japanese language.



*Ms Kanazawa*



*Ms Johnston*



*Ms Yamashita*

Responding to the newest project of the Japanese Ministry of Education, which announced last summer the desire to have 200 additional IB schools within the next 5 years, the IB organized this training for bilingual MYP teachers in order to be able to provide educated workshop leaders for the next stage of the project. It is an honor for our school to have teachers educated as IB workshop leaders. Skills they acquired in this training will surely be used in their everyday teaching at KIST.

As the only IB World School in the Kanto Plains area offering all three IB programs, we continue to be proactively involved with MYP curriculum developments.



**Vedrana Pavletic**  
MYP Coordinator

*Ms Pavletic*

## DP News

### IB Diploma results

During the summer vacation the IB Diploma results were issued to the students of the "Class of 2012". The table below summarizes the performance of the candidates and also KIST graduates from 2007-2012.

Year of Graduation	KIST mean points*	Number of Grade 12 full DP students	Number of students awarded the IB Diploma	Mean points of students awarded the IB Diploma*	Highest KIST Score*	Worldwide mean points**
2012	29.06	17	14	30	37	TBA
2011	30.5	16	14	32	40	29.61
2010	27.05	18	11	30	38	29.55
2009	31.80	10	9	32	45	29.51
2008	30.88	8	5	35	39	29.57
2007	30.50	2	1	36	36	29.56

\*Maximum score: 45 points

The results of the "Class of 2012" were positive, especially as their two-year IB Diploma curriculum had been interrupted by the March 2011 earthquake. As the table above shows, 14 out of 17 students achieved the award of the full IB Diploma. Eight students achieved a good to very good IB Diploma of 30 points of more. Congratulations to **Su Ah** who achieved the highest score of 37 points, a very good **bilingual** IB Diploma.

This year, 7 students were awarded a bilingual IB Diploma; 5 as they chose to study both English and Japanese as first languages whilst two students took Polish and Korean along with English as "A" languages. In the Class of 2012, nearly 50% of students were working towards the award of a bilingual IB Diploma. This is a 100% increase compared to the Class of 2009, three years ago. The school also had 25% of its full candidates take Mathematics HL, all of whom achieved a satisfactory result (4) or better. This average is much higher than the % of DP Mathematics candidates around the world who choose to take the Mathematics HL course.

Parents who would like more general information on IB Diploma results should go to <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/assessment/results/>. The IB publishes a "Statistical Bulletin" summarizing IB Diploma results, a link to which is on this webpage. The "Statistical Bulletin" for the May 2012 Examination Session should be published in November.

Congratulations to the students on their individual successes in the DP curriculum, and thanks to all the Grade 12 teachers from last year for all their hard work!

#### Mark Cowe

Secondary School Vice Principal/IB Diploma Coordinator  
[mark.cowe@kist.ed.jp](mailto:mark.cowe@kist.ed.jp)

### KIST IB Diploma examiners

KIST has five teachers who have been recognized for their assessment experience and expertise in a number of subjects by being employed as DP Examiners by the IB organization. This means that they can be called upon by the IB to assess students work and examinations from other schools in the IB world, usually in the period between March and June. We are hopeful that in the next year or two, this number will increase.

The following is a list of current KIST staff with the subjects they are recognized to examine in by the IB organization:

- **Kiyomi Kanazawa** – Japanese B
- **Etsuo Kamo** – Japanese A
- **Daryl Bates** – Visual Arts
- **Marina Babaeva** – Music
- **Mark Cowe** – History, Theory of Knowledge



*Ms Kanazawa*



*Mr Kamo*



*Mr Bates*



*Ms Babaeva*



*Mr Cowe*

## English Intensive Class

*The English Intensive Class (EIC) began in April 2012 to support the development of English skills in students before moving into the MYP at KIST or a similar program at other schools. There are currently 17 students in the class from Grades 6 through 10.*

Every student in the EIC has been working hard since we began studying at KIST. All of us were very nervous at first, but the teachers and other students helped us to be confident and not to be shy as well as to share our opinions and ideas with everyone.

At KIST, our rules are to be responsible in doing our homework, to respect our fellow students and teachers. The EIC students enjoy studying at KIST because of the school facilities, especially the field which everyone likes to play on or relax on, during their free time. I really enjoy studying at KIST because the teachers have different ways of teaching us. The teachers help us not only in our studies, but they help us enjoy our daily life at KIST. They always make sure that students understand the topics they are teaching us. That's why in the last semester the EIC students improved a lot, and I would like to thank all the teachers for doing their best to help us to be successful. Last semester we had LEAP and that helped every student to do their homework.

Being at KIST is a great pleasure for me because it can help me to be successful someday and it helps me to be open minded. Last semester we enjoyed the dance party, concert, and the family day. I enjoy learning every day; it makes me feel happy and comfortable. The EIC is different from other classes because our friendships and relationships with one another are amazing because we often play together and we always help and support one another.

Everyone in the EIC is looking forward to learning more and achieving more this semester.

**Cherokee (I9A)**



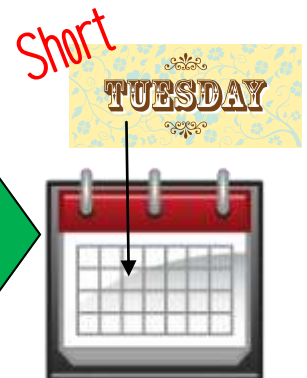
## Short Tuesdays

As indicated on the school calendar, there are 18 "short Tuesdays" scheduled for 2012-2013. We would like to remind families that on these days, school finishes at **2:10 p.m.** All students from K1 through Grade 12 are required to leave the school grounds at this time.

On short Tuesdays, no after-school activities are scheduled; however, the separate after-school LEAP program is not affected and will continue as scheduled.

The system of short Tuesdays was introduced in 2011 for the purpose of increasing school-wide collaborative planning time for teachers in response to IB recommendations.

August 28  
September 11, 25  
October 9, 30  
November 13, 27  
December 11  
January 15, 29  
February 12, 26  
March 12  
April 2, 16, 30  
May 14, 28





## Nationalities at KIST

One of the most visible characteristics of an international school is the wide range of nationalities represented in the school community, not only in the student population, but also amongst the staff.

This year at KIST, 47 different nationalities are represented in the student body and 18 nationalities amongst the staff. These are shown in the Wordle diagrams below. *Can you find your nationality?*



Student nationalities



Staff nationalities

## Free Dress Days

As indicated on the school calendar, free dress days will be held during 2012-2013 as follows:

**September 25 (Tuesday)**  
**November 28 (Wednesday)**  
**February 8 (Friday)**  
**May 16 (Thursday)**



All free dress days during the year are for the **whole school**. Separate notification will not be distributed, so please highlight the dates on your calendar. Students who choose to wear free dress on these days are required to pay a fee of 200 yen per student which is put towards particular projects or specific purchases.

Families are reminded that although students do not have to wear their uniform on these days, the clothes they wear must be conservative and uphold the image of the school. Furthermore, all students are expected to follow the regular school dress code in terms of general appearance. Please check the School Handbook if you are unsure of these expectations.

## Using the Internet at Home

### Tips from the Welfare Counselor

Trying to seek out helpful information regarding appropriate use of the Internet for our kids can be a challenge for parents. The following are some online Internet safety and appropriate use of the computer tips to share with your children.

#### Set up rules:

Post clear, simple, easy to read rules on or near the monitor or in a place that is seen on a regular basis. Create computer rules that are initially discussed with your children, so they have a say in how they will use their computer and Internet at home.

#### Use filters:

Consider using filtering or monitoring software for your computer. Look into safeguarding programs or options your online service provider might offer. These can include monitoring or filtering capabilities. Have your children use child friendly search engines when completing homework.

#### Look at history files:

Take the time to view history files and see which sites your child has visited. If the history files have been deleted, there may perhaps be a reason for that; therefore, a discussion with your child is necessary.

#### Talk about the dangers of e-mail and chat:

If your child uses chat or e-mail, talk to them about never meeting an online friend in person. Talk to your child about not responding to offensive or dangerous e-mail, chat or other communications. Know whom your children are exchanging e-mails with, and only let them use chat sites that you have discussed and approved.

#### Know what's going on:

Keep the computer in the living room or another open area of your home so you can informally monitor their computer and Internet use.

Internet Safety Resources:

<http://www.gcflernfree.org/internetsafety/extra/47>

#### Benjamin Fishman

K-12 Student Welfare Counselor



Mr Fishman



## Min in Seoul

### Volunteering at Severance Hospital

In August of this summer, I had a precious experience as a student volunteer at Severance Hospital of Yonsei University Health System (YUHS) in Seoul, South Korea. YUHS was founded in 1885 as the first modern medical institution in Korea; it has been the leader of medicine and is respected as one of the most prestigious medical colleges in East Asia.

After an orientation, I and other local high school students were assigned to different departments which all take a crucial role in operating the hospital. I was assigned to a department called "Health Insurance Review Team" and my main duty was to assist the official administration of the department. Although I was not assigned to a department where I would be able to directly interact with the patients, the volunteer activity allowed me to learn that there are a great number of people, other than doctors and nurses, who work behind the scenes to sustain the health care system that millions of people benefit greatly from.

**“ I believe a hospital volunteer activity is really enriching, especially for those interested in the medical profession. ”**

In fact, it was my second year participating as a student volunteer at YUHS and the experiences were extremely valuable and beneficial for me. As a CAS or C&S activity, I

believe a hospital volunteer activity is really enriching, especially for those who are interested in the medical profession. The best aspect of hospital volunteering is that there are numerous departments representing various aspects of a hospital. For example, last year, I worked in the rehabilitation hospital of YUHS where I was able to interact with the patients more closely than I did this year.

I strongly recommend young students of KIST to have valuable and special experiences at hospitals, where they can widen their intellectual horizons by learning about the preciousness of life and significance of health care systems to a human society.

For more information on student volunteering at YUHS, please visit <http://www.yuhs.or.kr/en/> or simply ask me!

Min (G11B)



Severance Hospital, Seoul

## Leaders of the Future

### KIST students at GYLC

In late June to early July 2012, several students from the Grade 10 Class of 2012 (Daniel, Min, Naishi, Moyu, Sashank, Adam, Leticia, Miku, Eun Ji) were enrolled to go to the Global Young Leaders Conference, which is like the UN, in Washington DC and New York for a fortnight to meet hundreds of students of their age from across the world. In this diverse cultural conference, the students learnt how politics and decisions in the UN worked whilst also learning and developing their leadership and courage. Other than the early mornings and the regular conferences, the students were able to go shopping and visit several sightseeing spots such as the Lincoln memorial, The UN Assembly, Ellis Island and more including a night cruise of New York.

During the two weeks, the students were able to become a leader in their own chosen national group where they played a key role in the Global Summit Simulation, whilst meeting key figures in the American government.



This is a key example of a CAS activity as the students were able to create several items such as speeches and activities for their nation group in the UN which were not only able to benefit their own knowledge, but also benefited their group as they were able to create speeches and debates making several groups win certain cases in the simulation. GYLC is a great chance for students to fulfil all of the points of CAS as it fits in all Creativity, Action and Service as they also acted as a leader in a country where most of the students hadn't been to on their own, so they could be a contribution to their group in the summit, and also to be able to bring new skills back to Japan so they could use it in school and in daily life and become a young leader here in Japan as well.

Not only did they meet new friends, but they learnt more about themselves and gained new skills in their leadership and confidence, which would help them live on their own in the future, whilst having one of the greatest times in their life.

Daniel (G11A)

## LEAP Update

Thank you to those who attended the LEAP Summer Academic Program which was held during the summer holiday. It was well-received by many students and parents. We have heard many students saying that the program helped them prepare for the coming school year.

LEAP is also offering a number of after-school programs that are designed to support students by focusing on their language and number skills. Our curriculum helps students improve their reading, writing and speaking abilities. In addition, we help students with their mathematical skills so they can obtain a well-rounded learning experience.



This semester, we are offering the following programs:



Days	Grades	Course
Mon-Fri	K1-K3	Literacy and Numeracy (3:30-4:30) (*Mon-Thu: waiting only)
		Homework Support and Childcare (4:30-5:30)
Mon, Wed, Fri	G1-G3	English—Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking (3:30-4:30) (*Waiting only)
Tue, Thu	G1-G3	Mathematics (*Tue: waiting only)
Tue, Fri	G4-G5	English
Mon, Wed	G4-G5	Mathematics

Please visit our website (<http://k-leap.jp>) for more information. If you have any questions regarding LEAP, please e-mail us at [leap@kist.ed.jp](mailto:leap@kist.ed.jp).

The LEAP Team



## Evacuation Drills

Evacuation drills are held periodically during the year for the whole school. This year, four drills are scheduled throughout quarters 1, 2 and 3. These will cover the possibility of earthquake, tsunami, fire and intruders. The first drill was an earthquake drill held on August 22. In the event of an earthquake, students are instructed to move into a safe position such as beneath a desk and wait for the shaking to subside. When instructed, students then proceed to the main playground via the nearest and safest exit with their class. Students practiced these procedures during the drill.

Evacuation drills are particularly important in light of the earthquake and tsunami disaster of March 2011 and are part of an ongoing effort by the school to raise student awareness of safety matters. They also help us identify potential problems or areas that need further consideration in the event of an actual evacuation.

For parents and visitors who may be on campus during an evacuation drill, we also ask for your cooperation in participating in the drill together with students and staff.



## Library News

### Welcome back from KIST Libraries!

We have so many wonderful new books in the Elementary Library, which were purchased using proceeds from KISTival 2011. Students are already enjoying reading them or using them in their Unit of Inquiry, and there are still more new resources to come! Thanks to the whole school community for helping us to upgrade library resources. The Library Media Centre (LMC) also has lots of great new resources, so please come and check them out on the new books shelves! We have renewed our subscriptions of Destiny, QuestiaSchool, Britannica School Edition and Turnitin. Students will be learning to use these during the LMC Orientation sessions with Mr Andi.



### We have made some changes in the borrowing procedures for Elementary students this year.

The changes make borrowing books more flexible, and will allow the books to circulate faster, so popular titles will be easier to get hold of! Previously, all students in G1-5 checked out four books once a week when they came with their class to the library. Sometimes, students wanted to read more, and sometimes they couldn't finish all of them in time. This year, students can check out two books when they come for their class visit, and then change them as many times as they like in the free library time during the school day. Students, please remember to ask the teacher for a library pass if you want to visit the library. Students are already enjoying the increased access, with some students reading six books in the first week! Parents, you are always welcome to visit the library after school to check out books with your students.

### Library hours:

	Students	Staff
LMC	8.15am to 4.30pm*	8.00am to 5pm
Elementary Library	8.30am to 4pm**	8.00am to 5pm

\*On short Tuesdays, both libraries are closed to students after school.

\*\*Elementary students must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver in the libraries after school.



In the LMC, students from G6 and 7 and EIC I6 and 7 have started the new reading activity Hungry Readers. This program encourages students to read, review and share books with others using Destiny Quest. Students who complete the Hungry Reader booklets will go in the draw for a PIZZA PARTY! **September 28** will be the first draw of the winners, so make sure that you turn in all your Hungry Reader booklets to Mr Andi on or before **September 26**. Thanks to Mrs Hall, Ms Haines, Ms Scardino and Ms Gore for endorsing this reading activity with their students.

We greatly appreciated the help we got from the **PTA Library Committee** members, parent and students volunteers last year. But with all these new books, the work is not over yet! We always need help from parents with covering new books to protect them and make them last longer. Please consider joining the Library Committee or just dropping in to the LMC to help out. The first meeting will be **September 19**, at **9am** in the LMC (second floor Main building), all parents are welcome to come and see how you can help and support the libraries.

### Important upcoming dates

<b>September 19</b>	First PTA Library Committee meeting, 9am, LMC
<b>September 28</b>	First Hungry Readers prize draw for secondary students
<b>November 2</b>	DEAR Dress Up Day book character and costume parade for elementary students

Thanks to the school administration for their continued support to make KIST Libraries learning places for the whole KIST community.

### KIST Libraries Staff



## Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present **Christian Thompson** who joined KIST's IT office team in 2009 as the Education Technologies Integrator. Since April 2012, he has also been teaching technology within the English Intensive Class (EIC).



*Mr Thompson—well-known for his lively presentations—shares his thoughts on technology.*

- **Tell us something interesting about your hometown.**

[York, Pennsylvania](#) is the home of [York Peppermint Patties](#), the 90's band [Live](#), and the largest [Harley-Davidson](#) motorcycle factory in the United States. It is known by locals as the true [First Capital of the United States](#).

- **What is your favorite place in the world?**

On the back of my motorcycle dodging taxis in Seoul, South Korea. I spent six fantastic years there and was very reluctant to leave. To this day, you can often find me in Shin-Okubo, which is a kind of "Koreatown" here in Tokyo. Seoul will always be my home away from home.

- **Who would you like to meet if you had the chance and why?**

Winston Churchill. More than any single individual, he was responsible for saving Western Civilization from itself, and the world from the Nazis. I still get goosebumps when I hear his "[Fight on the Beaches](#)" speech.

- **Do you have any special skills or talents?**

I don't know about special, but I play guitar, can fumble through conversations in 5 languages (English, Spanish, Korean, Japanese and Romanian), and have an uncanny ability to keep it all in perspective and not stress about the little things in life.

- **Please share a little known fact about yourself.**

When I was in grade 2 in elementary school, I won the school spelling bee. However, on the trophy I received, my name was spelled "Christine". That's irony for you.

- **What is your most prized possession?**

I'm not very much into material possessions, but if I had to choose, I would have to say my guitar, The Shiva. We make beautiful music together. That and a very fast Internet connection - viva Japan!

- **What words would you use to describe yourself?**

To paraphrase a line from *The Simpsons*, "Moodle is all things to all men, and one lucky woman, Mrs. Moodle."

- **If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?**

Cripes...where to begin?

- **Is there anything you are trying to learn/improve about yourself at the moment?**

I'm taking a PHP programming course with my colleague, Mr Whittaker, trying to slim down (well, I switched to Diet Pepsi instead of regular pepsi...that counts, right?), and improving my Moodle skills.

- **Do you have any special message for your fans?**

I have fans? If so, make yourselves known to me...I command it!

## Office Updates

### School fees due

The deadline for payment of the 2nd installment of school fees for 2012-2013 is Monday, September 17. Please check your annual invoice for details. Please be reminded that invoices are distributed once only per school year with details for the whole year. If you have misplaced your invoice or require further information on payment, methods please contact the office by telephone or e-mail.

### School bus one-way service

In response to requests from parents, we are pleased to announce the introduction of a new one-way bus service from this school year. Prices for the one-way service for each route are half the cost of the regular round-trip service. The following conditions apply:

- The one-way service is limited to usage in the morning only or the afternoon only for the full week. Requests for usage on specific days during the week cannot be accepted.
- Children registered as one-way users will not be permitted to use the round-trip service at any time.
- Due to the limited numbers of seats available preference will be given to those applying for round-trip services.
- If seats are not available on a particular route, students will be added to the waiting list.

Families who wish to use the one-way service should submit a **School Bus Application Form** to the office. The form is available on the Community >> Forms page of the school website. Children already using the round-trip service may also apply for the one-way service. The due date for applications is September 25. Any refunds due will be arranged at a later date.

### School ID cards

#### *Are you using your ID card?*

All students from G1 and above are required to scan their ID card at the gate on each and every occasion when entering and leaving the school grounds, including situations when the gate is opened by someone else. The only exception to this is for students who take the school bus. Students who fail to scan their card may be marked absent from school.

All parents are also required to scan their card when entering and leaving the school so that we have a record of all visitors on campus for emergency purposes. Please be sure to bring your card with you every time you visit the school during the day as well as for parent sessions held after school hours. Additional parent cards may be ordered through the office at the cost of 2,000 yen per card. An application form is available on the Community >> Forms page of the school website.

Please be reminded that:

- ID cards are easily damaged so we strongly recommend that you keep your card in a hard-type case.
- ID cards will not scan correctly if used next to another smartcard such as Pasma or Suica. Cards should be separated or placed in a card holder with separated sleeves.

## Secondary SRC

### Welcome back to school from the SRC!

We are very excited about the upcoming year in the SRC! We've just finished up the homeroom elections and are looking forward to meeting with all the new SRC members, including our new representatives from the English Intensive Class (EIC), for a very productive year.

Over the past week, homeroom representative candidates campaigned among their classmates. They gave short speeches to their respective homerooms in order to give their classmates more information about why they would be good candidates to represent their peers on the SRC, after which all homerooms (G6-12) voted and elected homeroom representatives.

This year we are looking forward to building on the goals and aims from last year that we shared with our peers in the executive elections, and also maintaining traditions such as our upcoming dance. Using our 'draft' Constitution and proposal-writing system, we hope to bring many improvements to the school this year, and will keep the community posted on what we are doing.

### Executives



Secondary SRC Executive Committee

**President**  
Monica (G12A)  
**Vice President**  
Miri (G12B)  
**Treasurer**  
Min (G11B)  
**Secretary**  
Kouta (G10B)



Congratulations to the newly elected homeroom representatives.

### Homeroom Representatives

**Grade 6**  
Jin Il (G6A) | Kevin (G6B)  
**Grade 7**  
Selena (G7A) | Hee Young (G7B)  
**Grade 8**  
Moana (G8A) | Akshara (G8B)  
**Grade 9**  
Shah Raj (G9A) | Keun Woo (G9B)  
**Grade 10**  
Mikio (G10A) | Tatsuya (G10B)  
**Grade 11**  
Akiko (G11A) | Taisei (G11B)  
**Grade 12**  
Chaitanya (G12A) | Airi (G12B)  
**EIC**  
Jong Won (I6A) | Hee-Eun (I10A)

...and Mr Fishman as  
Teacher Representative



## Founders' Awards

The Founders' Awards program was established three years ago by the school's founders, Mr and Mrs Komaki, with the aim of recognizing students who make significant contributions to the school community, and to encourage students to maintain motivation in their studies. There are two types of awards: **KIST Study Scholarships** and **KIST University Support Scholarships**. Further information about the program is available in the "Support" area of the school website. Specific details for the next round of awards will be uploaded later in the year and families will be notified accordingly.

Congratulations to the following three students who have received awards this year.

**KIST Study Scholarships**  
Kouta (G10B) - Silver award  
Daniel (G11A) - Bronze award



Kouta



Daniel

**KIST University Support Scholarships**  
Su Ah (Class of 2012) - Bronze award



Su Ah



## College Guidance News

Greetings from the College Guidance Office! We are very pleased to announce that Mr Robert Johnson has joined the office as another College Guidance Counselor from this year. Mr Johnson has had 28 years' experience in teaching English in public high schools in California and has also provided college essay writing workshops for many years. His "Personal Statement Workshop" for KIST G12 students has already started during Friday G12 Advisory and students are working on their personal statements/college essays for their college applications.

The "Class of 2012" final destinations by country:

14 students enrolled at universities in Sep. 2012  
 USA: 3 students  
 Canada: 3 students  
 Japan: 7 students  
 Korea: 1 student  
 4 students are applying for March/April 2013 intakes  
 Japan: 3 students  
 Korea: 1 student  
 1 student is taking a gap year in Japan

As indicated above, Japan was the most popular destination, followed by the USA and Canada. One of the reasons for this might be recent trends among Japanese universities to open new English courses, including the School of International Liberal Studies at Waseda University, College of International Relations at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Department of Global and Transcultural Studies at Meiji Gakuin University and Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Kyoto where our students have opportunities to continue their higher education in English in Japan.

### Upcoming events

**College Fairs** (open to the public, free entry)

- September 29 (Saturday) 11:00-17:00  
**"JASOO Study Abroad Fair"**  
[http://www.jasso.go.jp/study\\_a/info\\_fair.html](http://www.jasso.go.jp/study_a/info_fair.html)
- October 13 (Saturday) 13:00-18:00  
**"Education UK Exhibition 2012"**  
<http://education-uk-fair.jp>
- October 14 (Saturday) 13:00-18:00  
**"International Education Fair"**  
<http://www.beo.co.jp/fair/english/index.html>

**College Visits at KIST** (for KIST G9-G12 students and parents)

- October 10 (Wednesday) 15:30-16:30  
 The Arts University College at Bournemouth, UK
- October 11 (Thursday) 11:30-12:30  
 The George Washington University, USA

**PSAT at KIST** (compulsory for G10 and optional for G11)

- October 17 (Wednesday) during school hours (see the separate PSAT letter for more details)

**Keiko Okude and Robert Johnson**  
 College Guidance Counselors



Mrs Okude



Mr Johnson

## Live@edu to Office 365

In June, KIST upgraded its e-mail system from Live@edu to Office 365. As explained during the Parent Welcome Night sessions, there are many benefits to gain from this changeover.

All parents, students and teachers need to access their school e-mail accounts via the following address:

<https://login.microsoftonline.com>

If you have trouble accessing your school e-mail, please [try deleting your temporary Internet files and cookies](#) in your preferred browser. If the problems persists please contact the IT Office.

## News in Brief

### Uniforms and general appearance

- Jewelry and accessories (including earrings and earring posts) should not be worn at school, including free dress days.
- Hair that is longer than collar length should be tied back. Fringes which cover the face when looking down should also be tied with a hairpin. Hair ties, ribbons, hairpins and hair bands should be plain black or navy blue.

### School photographs

Class and individual student photographs will be taken on October 1 and 2. All students should be present on these dates as class photographs can only be taken once. Further details will be distributed soon.

### Lost and found

All school uniforms currently in lost and found will be sold at the bazaar at this year's KISTival if not claimed by September 28. All other items will be disposed of accordingly.

### Arrival time at school

Families are reminded that students are requested not to be on school grounds before 8:15 a.m. as limited teacher supervision is available. In the event that they arrive earlier on a certain occasion, they must wait quietly in the breezeway area near the reception counter.

## Summer Internship at Keio University

Grade 12 students, Preeti (G12A), Marie (G12B) and Monica (G12A), participated in an internship program at Keio University during the summer vacation. We hope you enjoy reading about their fascinating experiences.

Our first encounter with Professor Inami, the person to permit, mentor and supervise our internship, was on a TED Talk show that we watched on YouTube. He presented brilliantly, exhibiting the 'Optical Camouflage' system that he and his team had just recently invented. One can only imagine the feelings of awe and respect that we harbored as we prepared ourselves to meet this highly acclaimed university professor.

Added onto our layer of anxiety was of not knowing what to foresee or expect as we met our college guidance counselor, Mrs Okude, at the silver ball, Hiyoshi's central trademark. The summer heat was stifling and overbearing, and we were relieved to be soon ushered into the prestigious building of the Graduate School of Media Design, Keio University (KMD).

On the first day, we were introduced to the four different projects we had a choice of participating in within our two weeks at KMD: the Optical Camouflage, Popuppy, Thermo Haptic, and Tele-existence. The three of us agreed to work on separate projects in order to know about each separate one. The following is a summary of our experiences, narrated separately by each person:

### Preeti: Optical Camouflage



My project aim was to extend the optical camouflage technology, and create an "invisible chair" – literally, a chair that

deludes one's thinking in making them think that they are floating in mid-air. Even with some background knowledge obtained from my physics classes, I had some difficulty in grasping the complex concepts behind my project. The first few days involved reading literature, creating and experimenting with a small

prototype, and conversing with graduate students to gain adequate knowledge and understanding of the physics involved. I then approached the project by devising a mathematical model, which proved to be quite tedious: many hours of sleep were sacrificed, many sheets of paper thrown away. Nonetheless, the final model was constructed on time, and to my delight it worked successfully.

This internship was a great opportunity for me to gain insight into the real-life process of investigating, prototyping, and evaluating my product for my potential future career as an engineer. Moreover, I was able to understand the application of physics and mathematics to solve real life problems.

### Marie: Thermo Haptic Project

Haptics refers to the sense of



touch or contact with our skin that we perceive through interacting with objects.

One present, basic example of the implementation of haptics in a device is the vibration mode of mobile phones. Preceded by the term "thermo", the project title only naturally refers to the branch of science that incorporates thermal sensations to technology. My project thus aimed to create a prototype of a thermo haptic setup, in which a biconvex lens was used to collimate the rays of a light source onto a mirror, which in turn can be moved to manipulate the location of the light's focal point on the user's skin.

With no diploma experience of physics or design technology subjects, I had to patiently while my hours researching and investigating the fundamental



In front of the statue of Yukichi Fukuzawa, founder of Keio University

theories underlying thermo haptics. However, as I added onto my layers of skills and knowledge on the topic, I was gradually able to help aid in the design of the setup. The internship had allowed me to learn and use the programs Inkscape Portable, SolidWorks, Lenstoy, Processing and Arduino, to operate the laser cutter, and how to build a feasible design using acrylic materials. These are knowledge and skills that I may have never otherwise gained if I hadn't taken the internship!

### Monica: Tele-Existence



As part of my project, I created a basic prototype simulating visual tele-existence. Tele-

existence involves using technology to let people feel that they are present in and can interact with a remote environment, in real-time. Imagine being in one place and being able to control the actions, as well as see, hear, and feel your environment as if you were in the place of a surrogate robot. It may sound like a plot in a sci-fi movie, but this is what the team of researchers at Keio University had achieved, and what I was lucky enough to learn about and experience this summer. I worked in the same lab where the tele-existence surrogate robot (named TELESAR V) was created, and in one of my days there, was allowed to experience tele-existence myself. Wearing a stereoscopic head-mounted display, and a jacket and gloves

Continued on next page



*Continued from previous page*

which sent signals to the TELESAR, the robot would imitate my movements such as turning my head, moving my hands and torso, and feeding me back the texture and pressure sensations that its 'fingers' felt. (One of the strangest and most interesting feelings I've ever experienced is bringing my hand up in front of my face expecting to see my fingers, only to be met with a big, scaly robot hand, moving its fingers the same way as me!)

This experience taught me so much, not only about human physiology and technical skills related to programming, mechanical design and engineering, but also encouraged me to think about how human perception can be simulated. It was amazing to see how science and technology could be applied to bring the concept of visual, auditory and kinesthetic tele-existence to life, and to think about the implications this has for the future.

Working under the guidance of graduate students and spending time at the university campus gave us a snippet of the expectations of what university life can be like. We were stunned at the lifestyle of the graduate students, which was centered on anything but sleep and free time. Even still, their enthusiasm towards their projects could be felt; and who can argue, enthusiasm is the greatest asset in the world, as well as being the engine of success.

The eve of the final day was the latest we had all ever stayed at Hiyoshi, one of the latest we had ever stayed up in the night to work and prepare for our final reports and presentations. Despite our nervousness and tension in presenting to Mrs Okude, Professor Inami and his graduates the next day, the final outcome was highly rewarding and all too short-lived. Looking back, we even miss walking toward the sweeping architecture of the university building, the friendly cafeteria in which we held conversations and ate our meals voluptuously, and the intense but enriching hours spent working with our supervisors. Overall, the internship had provided us with an invaluable experience that we feel extremely grateful for. Despite the many challenges we had to face before our final presentation and report, it was a very beneficial experience, one of which we can only hope to repeat when we enter into college.

## Athletics Update

### Welcome back students and parents!

Another school year is upon us and that means another successful year of clubs and competitive sport here at KIST. We have many athletic events scheduled this year including volleyball, cross country, basketball, soccer/futsal and athletics, not to mention the many sporting clubs being offered.



The selection process for our ISTAA (International Schools of Tokyo Athletics Association) competitive teams has gone through some changes over the summer. This year our ISTAA competitive teams will be selected from a series of tryouts and clinics to ensure that we offer the top level of competition within this league. Not only skill and athleticism are measured in these tryouts. Coaches are looking for those student athletes who are committed to learning and developing as balanced young adults.

If students are not selected to the competitive teams, they will have chances to further develop their skills in the off-season through involvement in club sport. These clubs will take place outside of the competitive season, meaning in the next club session. We have just completed this process for our U14 and U18 volleyball teams and it has been a great success. In some cases, such as volleyball, coaches will choose to have a "practice team" who will join in training but not travel to compete in ISTAA-sanctioned matches. This ensures that the children all receive the same developmental privileges while providing a goal to strive for. This process was introduced in an attempt to build students' sense of accountability and commitment to their teammates, coaches and school in hopes of building a stronger sense of competition and school spirit here at KIST.

If you have any questions about this process and clubs offered, please contact Mr Jay Leroy directly at: [jay.leroy@kist.ed.jp](mailto:jay.leroy@kist.ed.jp).

### Events to look out for on the KIST Athletics Calendar:

- Secondary Field Day—Tuesday, September 18 during advisory
- Elementary Field Day—Wednesday, September 19, 8:40am-10:10am
- ISTAA Boys U14 Volleyball Clinic—Saturday, September 29, 9am-2pm @ KIST
- Yokohama J/V Girls Volleyball Tournament—Friday, October 5-6 @ Yokohama International School
- ISTAA Girls U14 Volleyball Clinic—Saturday, October 13, 9am-2pm @ Tokyo International School
- ASIJ Elementary Soccer Jamboree—Saturday, November 3 @ American School in Japan
- ISTAA Cross Country Championships—Friday, November 30 @ hosted by KIST

Thank you for your ongoing support and participation.

GO COMETS!!!!

**Jay Leroy**  
Athletic Director/PYP PE Teacher



## Alumnus Report

*Maung Pyay Phyo Oo (PPO) is an alumnus of KIST's "Class of 2011." He is currently in his second year at the University of Chicago.*



Hi everyone! Some of you may not know me, but I'm PPO, and I graduated KIST with the "Class of 2011", and now I attend The University of Chicago in the Class of 2015 (uchicago.edu).

I'm writing this from a volunteer house of "It's Not Just Mud" in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture. I'm here on a volunteer trip coordinated by the Habitat for Humanity and Japanese Student Association at the University of Chicago. I was able to help organize a trip to bring 7 students from the university to Japan. This is only one part of my college life.

College life is "BIG". There are so many parts to it from the hours of studying, tons of sports, numerous concerts, days of talking in the common room, and all the time spent in the city.

Honestly, studying is hard. It's not an easy task at uChicago. We are known as the place 'where fun comes to die' because of the school's focus on academics. That line is pretty debatable, I guess. It just depends on how you manage yourself and the workload. As an example, during my first quarter at uChicago, I started off by reading

Adam Smith, Karl Marx and Emile Durkheim for my social science class. NO IDEA WHAT WAS GOING ON. They weren't even articles ABOUT those writers, I had to read what they actually wrote! Their writings were so dense and packed, that it took me ages to 'decipher' it. But on the other hand, I get to take classes like economics taught by Steven Levitt (the author of *Freakonomics*), elementary ballet, or pilates!

I get to do pretty much whatever I want at school! Usually I go to the gym in the morning before class; it's really nice to get sports done quickly. If I can't, I squeeze a session in at 11 p.m. with a friend or head over to the Midway Plaisance (a giant row of soccer fields) for midnight soccer! Or I might participate in the week-long zombies vs. humans going on around the campus. In college, I get to do whatever I want, whenever I want! (To a certain extent).

But I guess my favorite thing at college is just being there. Living in a dorm, and being able to 'access' my friends all the time, opens my mind up. Just chatting with my friends is DEEP. We can debate

endlessly about any topic, from hummus to life, and argue against each other, helping us see all points of views. Or I can take a walk with them over to Rockefeller Chapel for a break, through the evening breeze and into the Neogothical chapel that has the most beautiful architecture. My mind just moves into a whole different world. College is a liminal experience, and it's great. I feel great. You will too, if you can find the right one for you.

Every university will have a lot to offer. But it all depends on how you take it. You could go to Harvard and end up nowhere, or go to a community college and have the greatest intellectual experience of your lifetime. If it doesn't work out at first, it's fine. You'll learn to adapt or you can just change schools if something goes wrong. University is malleable, don't stress too much, and go with your guts; it'll all work out in the end.

**Maung Pyay Phyo Oo**, Class of 2011  
University of Chicago



*Rockefeller Chapel*



*PPO enjoying lunch with his friends in the city*

Photos by Daniel Tracht

## PTA News

We, the Executive Members of the PTA for the current school year, would like to introduce ourselves to the KIST community. Since last year when the PTA was re-established, we have been working actively launching the PTA and trying to ensure that its operations run as smoothly as possible. Using our experiences from the past year, we hope to offer a variety of new activities during the school year. We are dedicated to supporting our children, and by listening to opinions and ideas from other parents, will work hard to solve any issues which students currently face.

PTA operations have improved immensely thanks to the support of all of the KIST community and we welcome you to attend our committee meetings. Your support and cooperation is needed by all committees. You can feel a real sense of achievement when planning each event and it is also a great opportunity to meet parents from other grades. All parents are welcome to join.

Each committee can be accessed via the school e-mail system.

### Committee reports

#### 1. Cultural Connections Committee

As KIST's student and faculty body is composed of different nationalities, this committee (CCC) aims to promote mutual understanding and enhance cultural connections among students, parents and faculty members. The committee's main activity is to support the school's National Costume Day/International Mother Language Day which will be held on February 21. The committee also sponsors cultural coffee mornings where a particular culture is introduced and featured over a cup of coffee in a casual atmosphere. Feel free to contact [pta.cultural.connections@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.cultural.connections@family.kist.ed.jp) for more inquiries.

#### 2. Library Committee

This committee works with the library staff to update and improve library and media resources and services for students and staff, to include planning events such as book fairs, read-a-thons, textbook sales, book clubs, Scholastic book orders, etc. Please contact us at [pta.library@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.library@family.kist.ed.jp).

#### 3. Newcomers Committee

This committee welcomes families new to KIST by providing support, information and resources on the school and local community, and general advice on settling in, and is planning to introduce a buddy family system and provide a KIST welcome basket. The committee assists with the Parent Welcome Nights held at the beginning of the school year for new families joining KIST. Please contact us at [pta.newcomers@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.newcomers@family.kist.ed.jp).

#### 4. Student Activities Committee (formerly known as the "Parents Booster Committee")

This committee supports the extracurricular programs to ensure the students have a positive and rewarding experience. We are seeking new and interesting ways to enhance these programs. We also sponsor occasional programs for parents/staff. Activities planned for 2012-2013 include: 1) Fundraising for sporting equipment; 2) Cross Country safety support (Nov. 16 and 30); 3) Recruiting volunteers for extracurricular programs; 4) Supporting athletes' visits; 5) Recruiting for new committee members—We are looking for many more participants this year! Please contact [pta.student.activities@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.student.activities@family.kist.ed.jp).

#### 5. News Committee

Parents on this committee are the key source of disseminating news and information about the school and the PTA to the KIST community, to include posting up-to-date information about upcoming events and activities on the PTA website, in newsletters etc. Please contact us at [pta.news@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.news@family.kist.ed.jp).

#### 6. Events Committee

This central organizing committee is comprised of parents who enjoy planning events, activities and fundraisers. The committee seeks to bring the KIST community together by soliciting ideas and assistance from other parents to plan social events, fun activities, and excursions that appeal to various constituencies within the KIST community. The committee also works with other committees to establish and plan fundraising events and activities. Have you seen the new gym and pool? Help us make this dream a reality. The committee will have big fundraisers toward this goal, smaller fundraisers for smaller goals, and of course, just-for-fun events as well. Your ideas and support are needed. [pta.events@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.events@family.kist.ed.jp)

#### 7. Bell Mark Committee

The purpose of this committee's is to establish and promote the Bell Mark Scheme within the school for the collection of these coupons for the benefit of the school community. We will be establishing a calendar of meeting times in the next few weeks so please keep an eye on the new PTA notice board across from the reception counter at the entrance to the school! If you have had experience with this scheme before and can help us to figure it out, we would be really appreciative! Even if you have no experience and are interested in joining us, please contact us by e-mail at [pta.bellmark@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.bellmark@family.kist.ed.jp).

### PTA Executive Committee 2012-2013



**President**

**Akiko Inoue**  
(Emiri G6A, Taisei G11B)



**Vice President**

**Mitsuka Ishikura**  
(Hikaru G7B)



**Treasurer**

**Scott Smith**  
(Shu G11B)



**Secretary**

**Charlotte Jacobsen**  
(Harriette G3B, Magnus G1B)

Please check out the new PTA news board across from the reception counter. We will post information about upcoming events on the board. If you have any news you would like to share with the KIST community, please e-mail it to [pta.news@family.kist.ed.jp](mailto:pta.news@family.kist.ed.jp). The PTA News Committee is looking for volunteers to assist in creating a PTA newsletter so please share your skills!