

THE BREEZE

No. 60

St. Michael's Association

June 2022

Founders' Day Celebrations!



St. Michael's School celebrated its Founders' Day at the School this year on 11th March with various colourful activities on stage with children wearing their respective national costumes. Participation in the celebration was limited to the School students and teachers, as precautionary measures towards Covid-19 had to be taken still. However, the others could experience the joy of the event through YouTube just as the writer did.

The speaker this year was an alumnus, Seiichiro Peter Kaku '59, who resides in the countryside of Hiroshima Prefecture. It takes him about an hour to commute to his workplace - Fukuyama Maria Day Nursery- by car from his home, where he is a farmer on weekends and long holidays. Weekdays he works as its treasurer, and previously as Head of the Day Nursery.

St. Michael's Now!

The IS



With so many international schools around the world still enduring closures and restrictions, St. Michael's International School is grateful to have enjoyed yet another full school year in which we remained open, throughout which our young learners continue to enjoy a rich and broad curriculum enhanced by virtual learning opportunities. With an emphasis on preparing children for the future, our innovative curriculum integrates valuable aspects of digital learning and e-safety with the essential skills of collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking.

The pandemic highlighted the need for schools to better support the social and emotional needs of our young learners. In response, St. Michael's has implemented an ambitious Health and Wellbeing curriculum with the aim of ensuring that children know how to be safe and healthy, how to develop positive relationships, and how to ask for help when it's needed. A crucial development as across the world more and more people recognise the importance of nurturing positive mental health and the need to develop strategies to cope when things become challenging.

As COVID numbers slowly decline across Japan we have enjoyed carefully planned opportunities to welcome parents back to on-campus events. From COVID-friendly

class assemblies to the recent Platinum Jubilee celebrations in the park, it has been exciting to witness the family-friendly, community ethos that St. Michael's International School is famous for emerging from more than two years of COVID measures.

This family-friendly focus is underpinned by the actions of the St. Michael's Board of Trustees, who continue to proactively support families experiencing financial challenges as a result of the pandemic; maintaining the increased measures introduced in 2020, to help families in need. *The Miss Lea Scholarship Fund*, supported generously by SMIS alumni, has really made a significant difference. We cannot do this without your help. Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

As we mark the end of a third school year affected by COVID-19 it is good to see some green shoots of recovery as we look optimistically towards a sense of normality returning to education. One thing is clear, in a world which continues to be fraught with uncertainty, St. Michael's International School is emerging from the shadow of the pandemic even stronger than before.

~Gill Tyrer: Head of School~

The ELS



“There is nothing permanent except change.” This quote from the philosopher Heraclitus seems especially pertinent this year for the ELS. In March the ELS had its first Saturday School graduates who started from the preschool and went through all of the elementary school classes. The Day School also celebrated its advanced class graduation in March. Graduation is always bittersweet; it is with pride that we

see students move on to new and exciting challenges, but it is always sad to see them leave to start those adventures. The ELS also said ‘farewell’, though certainly not ‘good-bye’ to Ms Davies who returned to her family in Wales. Words do not do justice to how many lives she touched and how much her gentle influence motivated not only her students but those who had the honour of working with her. While the ELS saw graduates and teachers move on, we also welcomed new students and teachers this year. Mrs Raichura (Yumi-sensei to the babies) took over as the new Mommy & Baby class teacher in January, and the ELS welcomed almost 40 new students in its programmes in April.

Although change is inevitable, some things remain and stand the test of time and the heart and foundation of the ELS remain solid and true. As an important part of that heart and foundation I would like to invite you, the ELS alumni, to come and visit, to see the new changes, but to also say hello and feel the familiar warmth and welcome that makes the ELS so special to so many.

~Jonathan Bunch: ELS Coordinator~

Graduation!

The International School

Graduates 2022



Front Row: Iroha Masai, Sarina Sarkar, George Lyu, Junpei Narasaki, Maxi Lorenz
 Second Row: Ricca Nakatsuji, Siwoo Kim, Haru Morimoto, Reina Jhaveri
 Third Row: Linkstone Mori, Aika Yakura, Jash Jhaveri, Taishi Sushida-Bunch
 Fourth Row: Jonah Hall, Kensei Itashiki, Armaan Javeri, Kyle Sugie, Viraj Shah
 Top Row: Mirei Seki, Vivika Gulrajani, Prishaa Bothra

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A Message from the Student Leaders:



It is time to bid farewell to our teachers, friends and staff members of St. Michael’s International School. On behalf of the graduating class of 2022, we would like to say a few words about our time here at this wonderful school.



St. Michael’s has been like a home to us for a long time and every day we developed new skills and gained more knowledge. This school is a place where we can grow, work, and learn together; where we share the same 7 values and abide by them wherever we go.

St. Michael’s has given us a lot of unforgettable memories, such as the Year Six challenge week, the Sports Days, and all of the amazing IPC units that we had the opportunity to experience. We will miss all the amazing friends and teachers that have helped us thrive over the years. As we leave this school, we will take with us all the happy memories of our time here.

Today is our last day at St. Michael’s, but we will never forget how the School has helped us in so many ways. We have all developed personally and academically, as well as finding out about our place in the world and how we can make a difference. We would like to thank our parents and all our teachers who have helped us become who we are today.

As we grow older, St. Michael’s will always make up a huge part of our childhood memories. What we have learned here will continue to impact us positively throughout our lives, by giving us not only the skills to succeed ourselves, but also the understanding to help others on their life journeys too. Thank you.

~George Lyu & Reina Jhaveri~

The ELS



Cindy wears many hats: Mother of a boy who studies in the International school. A full-time worker at a leading company, and a student at the ELS. She decided to graduate from the ELS in March but is still pursuing her studies with us as a postgraduate student. Cindy is a wonderful showcase of how to lead an ever challenging, developing and satisfying life!

Akiha Cindy Hashimoto

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Moving on!

At the end of this school year, SMIS said goodbye to four teachers: Alina Grishko, Henry Cammell, Joanne Offer and Sarah Curtis. We wish them Good Luck on their next adventures and welcome them all to our Alumni Family.



It was an incredible experience living in Kobe and working at SMIS for two years. The past two years have been incredibly full of growth for me, professionally and personally. At SMIS, I learned about British culture and slight language differences such as broly, trousers, full stop, biscuits, rubbish, flat, garden, Maths, and queue. Now I am moving back to the US and have to remember to say period instead of a full-stop. I am grateful for all the staff who continually supported me at work and

in my personal life. I was fortunate to celebrate holidays such as Christmas and Thanksgiving with incredible people. I made some lifelong friends at SMIS who reached out to me when I was ill and knew how to make me laugh to tears. I will never forget their kindness and compassion.

I will miss living in Kobe and being able to bike almost anywhere. On the weekends, I enjoyed going to Harborland, Nunobiki Herb Gardens, Suma Beach, Chinatown, Mt.Rokko, and special events such as Kobe Luminarie. Kobe will always have a special place in my heart. I was also fortunate to have the opportunity to see a lot of beautiful places in Japan. A few of my favorite places I've visited were Ginzan Onsen in Yamagata, the Snow Corridor in Toyama, and Kawachi Fuji Gardens in Kitakyushu.

Shortly after school ends, I will be moving back to Washington to be closer to my family. After being away from family for three years and missing some weddings and funerals, I am looking forward to reuniting with my family. In September, I will start teaching 3rd grade in Bellevue, Washington. Although I will miss living in Kobe and exploring Japan, I am very excited to start a new chapter.

Thanks again to the SMIS staff for allowing me to grow, work, and learn together!

~ Alina Grishko~



After 7 wonderful years I am drawing my time at St Michael's to a close. I decided to come to Japan after spending 2 years in Egypt. I was looking for something completely different to my experiences in the Middle East, and I found it here! Even though it was a long way from my home and family in the UK, it was an easy choice to make and turned out to be the best decision of my life. The support network the school and community provides is truly fantastic and when I arrived I felt extremely settled in Kobe and at St. Michael's in no time at all.

My time in Kobe and at St. Michael's has been a truly life changing adventure and will stay with me for the rest of my life. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity I was given to work here and the support and professional opportunities I have received whilst here. I am grateful for every day I have spent here and for all of the unique and amazing experiences I have enjoyed and the fantastic people I have met. Since living here I have developed a love of the lifestyle and beauty of Japan and have decided to carry on my Japanese adventure in Fukuoka. But no matter where I go, I will forever treasure the incredible experiences, memories and friends I have made in Kobe and at SMIS. ~ Henry Cammell~

It all started so well - a new adventure in a new country, with amazing children and great colleagues. There was even a World Cup to enjoy! But little did we know what



was around the corner and the challenges we'd all face... Being in Japan during Covid was hard, cut off from family and restricted in our movements. But if I had to be anywhere, then Japan - and St. Michael's - was definitely a good option. It showed me that if you're with a bunch of caring people then anything is possible. Sticking together, we adapted to learning from home, tried out new technologies and even taught each other new facts via Zoom pub quizzes. (Did you know that Kobe has 1 of only 3 certified bronze statues of Elvis?) Just don't mention the dreaded word: quarantine!

To be honest, because of the overseas travel restrictions, I ended up seeing far more of Japan than I ever thought possible. We had the chance to raft in Gunma, snorkel in Okinawa and hike in Hokkaido. Digital art exhibitions in Fukuoka were followed by amazing nature in Miyazaki and then fascinating traditions in Nara - like setting a hillside on fire! I've simply loved exploring Japan, but after three years it's time to head off on a new adventure closer to my family. While I'll definitely miss the friends I've made here, I'm excited for a new opportunity in the Czech Republic. So if you're ever in Prague... ~ Joanne Offer~

After three years as the Year Three Teaching Assistant, it is time for me to say goodbye to the SMIS family. I moved to Kobe after living in the countryside of Kochi Prefecture, and was warmly welcomed into the SMIS community in 2019. I will forever be grateful for all of the friendships and connections I have made during my time here in Kobe and at SMIS. I have enjoyed all of the opportunities such as running various clubs and getting to know the wonderful children of SMIS. In addition, I had the privilege to travel around many of the prefectures of Japan. All of the memories I have made, I will truly cherish forever.



I have learned so much about myself and have grown professionally in so many ways. The skills I have learned at SMIS have prepared me well for the next chapter of life. I will miss everyone so much and if you are ever in New York, please reach out! ~Sarah Curtis~

Join us on our SMA Facebook!



Where are you now?

Some happy news in difficult global times!

I studied at SMIS between 2003 - 2005 leaving at the end of Year 6 with Mrs Hunter to go to a UK boarding school. After taking the scenic route through studying and work, I am now working in Jersey, The Channel Islands, as a Junior Doctor in Emergency Medicine. A few weeks ago, a new cohort of Junior Doctors arrived on the island including Kaori Ito. It didn't take long for us to get chatting and realise we were both SMIS graduates, although we never met as Kaori left several years before me in the late 90s.

We are a small island hospital so what are the chances of both meeting and working side by side in the same department! The power of SMIS bringing people together years later and on the other side of the world from our wonderful primary school.

With admiration and fond memories,

Rosie Baker



Photo of Kaori (right) and Rosie (left) in their Resuscitation Room at Jersey General Hospital after a night shift.

Where are you? How are you doing?

Hope you are all safe and well! We know that, with the COVID-19 still persisting, it is not easy for you to get together. But! But! If you ever have a chance to meet somebody from St. Michael's family, please share with us your information!

We are always delighted to hear from you!



Welcome back!

It is always exciting to welcome back our family members to school. If you ever have a chance to come nearby, please drop in and see how the school has changed for the better. We will be delighted to see you all again!

RECENT VISITORS

AT SMIS



Shun, Gyo, Kika Maki and Peter Ho came over from Hokkaido and walked around to check out the recent changes made at SMIS



Kinjal Jhaveri visited SMIS with her husband and showed him around while sharing memories of her time here...

Photo Gallery Inquiry No.9!

Please have a good look at the following photos. You might find you as a child or your friend. Please let us know if you have any information about the photos by emailing us.



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SMA Gathering!



Recent Gatherings

'Kobe Gathering with Irwin and Aki Tanaka from London!'

Dinner with the Ho Family

Meeting up with Pia Orum and her family who came down from Tokyo

*London Gathering 2022 is cancelled
due to COVID-19!*



*We regret to tell you that, after a long consideration, we
have decided to wait until 2023 to meet in London.*

OBITUARY



It is with a sad heart that I tell you that Kevin Willet passed away from heart failure in his home last February. Kevin taught in the ELS Adult Day School and Night School for many years and will be remembered by students and his colleagues for his dedication to teaching, support of students that went far beyond the classroom and his cunning wit and humour. Kevin was a teacher, mentor and friend to his students and will be missed by his colleagues and former students in the ELS. In this sad time I ask that you keep Kevin and his family in your thoughts and prayers, but also remember his thoughtful kindness and contributions that went so far beyond the ELS and St. Michael's International School community.

Jonathan Bunch

OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that we announce that Ahmed Aljonaid has passed away. Ahmed was part of the SMIS Community since 2005. Ahmed had been receiving cancer treatment since September 2021. In April he returned home to Saudi Arabia and sadly died a few weeks later. Our thoughts are with his wife Karla and son Ali-Kyle at this tragic time

Here is the link to the Ahmed's memorial site:

<https://www.forevermissed.com/ahmed-aljonaid/about>

May his soul rest in peace!

SUPPORTING ST. MICHAEL'S



Why not Share your Happiness and Support St. Michael's!

Births, marriages, graduation, new jobs and other special occasions all fill us full of joy and happiness. Sharing your good news multiplies its benefits for your happiness and longer-term life satisfaction, so the next time something good happens to you, don't keep it to yourself! Whenever you feel like sharing your happiness, you might want to share it with St. Michael's by making a donation.

After the donation of *one million yen* to the school's 70th Capital Campaign, our focus now is *Miss Lea scholarship* to support students in need and we donated *500,000 yen* to the scholarship fund last year. This donation has been a part of the fund the school's Scholarship committee manages. The committee has awarded nine scholarships in the past two years. The SMA donation ensures that all families who have applied so far have been supported financially by the school.

Your ever-lasting love and support for the school will help St. Michael's continue to provide an excellent education for many years to come!

How to donate: There are three options!

PayPal: Please go to the school webpage, click '*Community*' at the top of the page, and then '*Alumni*'. You will see '*Share Your Happiness Campaign*' at the bottom on the right-hand side. Click it and follow the instructions.

Bank transfer: Please use the following Alumni bank account to send your donation.

Bank/Branch: Mitsui Sumitomo Bank
 (Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation)
 Kobe Main Office (Branch code:500)
 Account: Saving Account 8579576
 Account name: Sei Mikaeru Kokusai Gakko
 From overseas Swift code: SMBCJPJT Branch code: 500

By cash: Please bring your donation to the school office and tell them that the donation is for the Alumni.

Messages from the donors!

***Thanks To Our
 Parents on
 Our Birthday
 (My husband's
 and mine) !
 ~Cindy Taru~***

***In honour of
 Miss Lea
 Scholarship!***

***~Satoru
 Hamada~***

Here is a variety of SMA Goods!



SMA Goods
Limited numbers available

White Tote Bag
@ 1800 yen each

Clear Water Bottle
(500ml)
@ 1000 yen

Bags
@ 1800 yen

Dimensions for White Tote Bag: 93cm (width), 30cm (height), 40cm (depth), 36cm (width at bottom), 6cm (width at bottom).

Dimensions for Dark Blue Tote Bag: 38cm (width), 30cm (height).

St. Michael's Association

ST.MICHAEL'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
17-2 NAKAYAMATE-DORI 3-CHOME CHUO-KU
KOBE 650-0004 JAPAN

<http://www.smis.org>

E-mail: alumni@smis-mail.org

TEL: (078) 231-8885 FAX : (078) 231-8899

