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NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

By John Pavel Kehlen

The arrival of a new year and new semester always offers the opportunity for reflection, and this spring proves no different; we all remember campus life as it was at the start of spring semester 2020, before the pandemic, and slowly but certainly, it appears that we're returning to academic life as we've previously known it. Last semester proved a great relief for many of us to be back on campus and to resume in-person learning. A common sentiment I've heard from students, colleagues, and staff alike: during the past two years our experience of time has changed — some weeks time appeared to hardly move, and then entire months would seem to blur into the next.

Looking back over more than twenty years of the PBRC and its activities, it's remarkable to observe how faculty and alumni have continued to build off of the efforts and energy they brought to campus life. Whether in the form of finished research, career openings, or access to new perspectives, the center has been able to assist in creating and sustaining connections between individuals and ideas across the Pacific. Now that the pandemic appears nearer to its end, we hope to continue to expand the various forms of support we're able to provide our community as the normal flow of events will resume in the coming months.

At an even greater distance, when thinking about the links and threads that span the nations and peoples of Asia and the Americas, it strikes me that the personal connections we establish may be the very essence of our mission. In my own history, I can think of specific moments that allowed me to create bridges across my understanding of history and culture: eating jiaozi at a night market in Taipei, maladroitly dancing as part of my neighborhood festival when an exchange student in Tokyo, trying to cross

a furiously busy intersection in Hanoi at midday while dodging torrents of traffic. Each is just a passing moment in my existence, but one that transformed what I knew of other peoples and of myself. Sometimes these moments have taken place much closer to home: a conversation about a couplet of Chinese poetry in a colleague's office, a student explaining the idiosyncrasies of her nation's dialect of Spanish, or, during the height of the pandemic, a class tutorial on Zoom, where I had a dialog with three students in virtual space about different words in our respective languages for grief and loss of loved ones.

However they occur, these individual moments create a context for my knowledge of myself within the world, and as teachers and scholars alike, each of us continues to create such networks of experience, which form the center of all genuine human inquiry. The PBRC offers members of our community the potential to create such experiences for themselves and with them to further develop their ideas and understanding across cultures, and I consider this one of the many unique opportunities available to our campus, and I encourage students and faculty alike to apply for our various grants in the coming months.

I'm also pleased to report that Professor Courtney Fung of Macquarie University will join us this March as our Distinguished Speaker; we hope you will find her research concerning the engagement of the PRC with the United Nations and the international community not only outstanding in depth but timely in its relevance as well. Although we realize the pandemic may be in its final phase, the PBRC will continue to host events online for the immediate future until we're certain that there are no undue risks to participants; we intend to resume in-person events as soon as conditions may allow in the months ahead. As always, we appreciate your continued support and understanding, and Kayo and I hope to see you (either on Zoom or face-to-face) during the spring semester.

With best hopes for a productive and healthy spring,

J P Kehlen



PBRC STAFF AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Staff

John Pavel Kehlen

Director

Kayo Yoshikawa

Program Coordinator

Faculty Fellows (2021-22)

Sarah England

Deike Peters

Advisory Committee

Garry Brewer, Yale

Edward Feasel, SUA

Shabbir Cheema,
East-West Center

Ian Read, SUA

Michael Lofchie, UCLA

PBRC STUDENT PROGRAMS

MEET OUR NEW JUNIOR SCHOLARS!

The PBRC Junior Scholars have interests mirroring those of the PBRC—humanistic development in the Pacific Basin. The program reflects the PBRC's goal of deepening its ties to Soka students, whose energies and ideas can shape the direction of the Center.

**Mayuna Tomita '22**

Mayuna Tomita is a fourth-year student from New Jersey. Concentrating in Environmental Studies, until recently she was sure she wanted to work in a field related to food systems after graduation, and spent this past summer interning at a Japanese farm located in Delaware. Recently, however, she realized that what had been a secondary interest these past two years may actually be her true vocation, and is worth exploring further. This secondary interest is about history and discourse—not simply about how and by whom mainstream history has been written, but about how the structure of entire fields of study at the outset pre-determine the kinds of knowledge that can be produced. She would like to spend her last semester at Soka training her ability to think and study using this meta-analytical lens.

Subina Thapaliya '22

Subina Thapaliya is a senior concentrating her undergraduate degree in environmental studies and economics. Since her sophomore year, she has served as a student program coordinator for campus sustainability at SUA. She assists the administration in assessing, planning, and implementing environmental, social, and economic sustainability on their activities and operations. Fostering her knowledge of environmental management and economic development, she aspires to work for the sustainable development of marginalized communities in the global south via a participatory approach. For her senior year capstone project, she is analyzing past and present policies on Glacial Lakes Outburst Floods (GLOFs) risk management in Nepal and drafting a policy proposal to engage local communities in the GLOF risk management.



PBRC STUDENT PROGRAMS

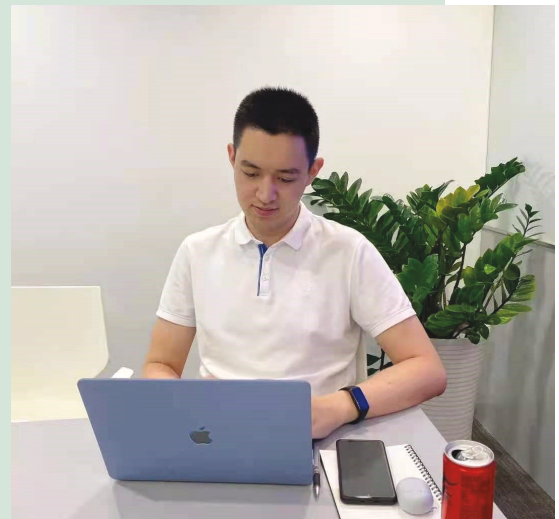
Amelia Hew '23



Amelia is a third-year student concentrating in International Studies from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Having interned for the Malaysian parliament, coupled with her Chinese ethnic background and her study abroad experience in Japan, she has developed a passion to learn about the regions of South-east and East Asia. Her particular research interests are in Malaysian politics, the modern history of Japan, nationalism and soft power in East Asia, and media production in Southeast and East Asia. Today, in line with her reason for being the President of the Soka Southeast Asian Student Association, Amelia connects with people all around the world on a humanistic level through her fluency in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Malay, Japanese, and her current endeavor of learning Spanish. She is excited to have the opportunity to develop herself through research initiatives provided by the PBRC.

Xiyang Ge '23

Xiyang Ge is a third-year student from Beijing, China, currently concentrating in Humanities. Xiyang's interests lie in food security in developing countries and the hunger crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past summer, Xiyang earned the opportunity to present at the 67th International Student Conference. He seeks to analyze how Asian countries like Myanmar and Bangladesh implemented various policies (e.g. regional lockdown) and their impact on the local community (e.g. increasing urban poverty). In addition, he is interested in brainstorming a dynamic food supply system with the combined effort of the private sector and government subsidy in the post-pandemic era.



Natsuha Kataoka '23

Seeking refuge in the country of liberty, Natsuha flew from her mentally suffocating home country, Japan. In a twist of fate, after two years of study at Soka, she now concentrates in Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences, passionately learning about her native culture through the lenses of literature and anthropology. She is especially interested in analyzing women's fashion in the premodern world, seeking to yield insights into the aesthetic embodiment of the female body through tensions between societal expectation and personal expression. She hopes to contribute to PBRC with her research, which aims to dismantle the fetishizing ideologies of fashion and to reexamine the meaning of female bodies.



PBRC STUDENT PROGRAMS



Pablo Zavala Reina '23

After living in Quito, Ecuador, for eighteen years, Pablo Zavala Reina arrived in the United States to study Economics, International Relations, and Mathematics at Soka University of America. After witnessing and learning about Latin America's political and economic history, Economic Development in developing countries became Pablo's main area of interest. In January 2021, Pablo participated in a research group to study the influence of national policies on Covid-19-related outcomes with Professor Junyi Liu. Since September 2021, he has worked with Professor Diya Mazumder to estimate the impact of petrol and diesel taxes on the expenditure patterns of Indian citizens. Pablo's other interests relate to finance and accounting, for which he interned at the real-state construction corporation, Uribe & Schwarzkopf. Growing up with Spanish as his native language, he studied English for twelve years, French for six years, Chinese for three years, and Portuguese for one year. Pablo aspires to expand his knowledge, experience, and education in national and international economic policy to impact and improve the lives of people in Latin America.

Incumbent PBRC Junior Scholars:

Leonardo Salvatore '22

Ninh Le '22

Thuy Le '22

Vibhu Walia '22

Tayná Baptista Ferreira

Minori Sakai '22

Jenski Nguyen '23

Michelle Boralessa '23

Yixin Wang '23

Aarohee Bhattarai '23

Chiharu Nagai '23

Sachi Nishida '23

For more information about the PBRC Junior Scholars, please visit our student programs page at www.soka.edu/pbrc

PBRC STUDENT PROGRAM

PBRC Student Photo Contest



By Kevin Chen, PBRC Photo Contest Winner



By Kevin Chen, *Aftermath of the Flooding*, Zheng Zhou, China, 2021.

In mid-July this summer, a serious floodwater submerged my hometown, the city of Zhengzhou, which is located in China's central Henan province. A year's worth of rain poured down on the streets over three days. The disaster killed over 300 civilians, including 2 students from the middle school I attended. The floodwaters lasted for several days, and its news coverage gained national attention and support. This tragedy changed millions of lives forever and taught me some valuable lessons. It caused me to realize how easy it can be to suddenly need help from others in society. It reminded me of the reasons we demonstrate compassion and

sympathy towards others because no one can be guaranteed that he or she will always be safe and protected. The stories of others matter to me; I know I could become one of those unfortunate people at any time because life is so unpredictable, and nobody ever knows what will happen next.

During the tragedy, 14 passengers lost their lives on the local subway. On July 27th, I visited ShakouLu subway station, where the incident took place. Outside the entrance, there were hundreds of flowers commemorating the dead. It was rare for me to witness a public memorial event like this. As hundreds of local residents passed by and paid their respects towards the victims, I could easily feel the emotions and sentiments among the residents, which showed me how precious life truly is. ■



Mourning for the Victims, Zheng-Zhou, China, 2021.



By Aarohee Bhattarai, *Serenity*, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2021



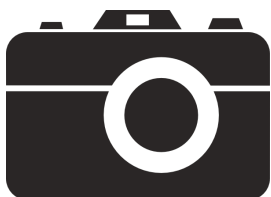
By Parik Chalise, *The American Dream*, Joshua Tree National Park, U.S.A., 2020



By Takami Saeki, *The Reminiscence of the Nagasaki Harbor*, Nagasaki, Japan, 2020



By Moses Odei Addai, *The World Trade Center*, New York, U.S.A., 2021



2021 PBRC Photo Contest Winners

All winning photos are displayed in the PBRC Library
(Ikeda 457)

For more info on-campus programs, visit our new website:

<https://www.soka.edu/pbrc>

ANNOUNCEMENT

PBRC Student Summer Grant 2022

Information Session

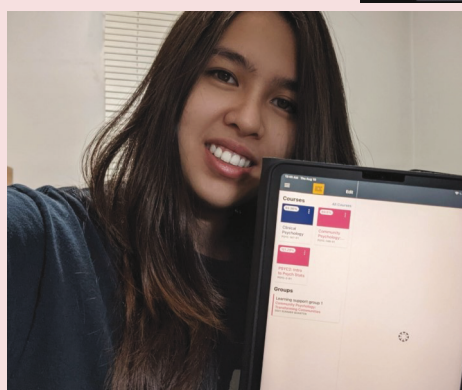
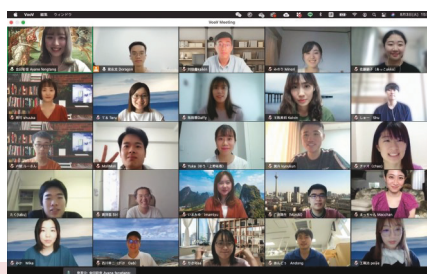
Tuesday, February 22, 2022

Via Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/98673863962>)

4:45—5:30 pm

The PBRC annually awards summer grants up to \$2,000 to SUA students on a competitive basis to undertake internships, learn languages, conduct research, or other educational activities.

PBRC Director John Pavel Kehlen will provide an overview of the program and share some advice for applicants. Additionally, previous grant recipients will share their experiences and advice.



For the guidelines of the program, please visit our website under "Student Programs" at

<https://www.soka.edu/pbrc>

PBRC Announcement

PBRC STUDENT PROGRAM

Pacific Basin Research Center

Summer Student Travel Award

Call for applications

Deadline: Friday, April 22nd 2022



The Pacific Basin Research Center is pleased to announce the call for applications for its annual student summer grant program. The PBRC will provide a maximum of ten awards of up to \$2,000 to help students build upon their campus-based education through varied global experiences during the summer months.

Due to the continuing COVID-19 crisis, the PBRC has had to revise our guidelines for the Summer Grant program. We will continue to support this important program, with three significant changes:

- We will only consider grants for activities that take place in a student's home country (this may include coursework and conference activity that take place through the internet);
- All travel associated with student internships and grants will be subject to continuous review by PBRC staff;
- The deadline for review of all applications will be **April 22, 2022**.

Award recipients will be expected to write a brief report detailing their experiences and to share their experiences with the campus community. These guidelines may be updated during the semester to reflect any changes in the ongoing pandemic.

To apply, please send your resume and brief overview of your prospective project (including rationale, timeframe, budget, and justification) to Kayo Yoshikawa, the PBRC Program Coordinator (kayoshikawa@soka.edu). Be clear if you have been accepted into a formal program or if the project remains unconfirmed. Please visit the PBRC website for suggestions and an overview of the project, including a list of projects from previous years (www.soka.edu/pbrc, under 'Student Programs').

If you have further questions regarding the grant, contact Kayo Yoshikawa (kayoshikawa@soka.edu) or Prof. John Pavel Kehlen (JKehlen@soka.edu).

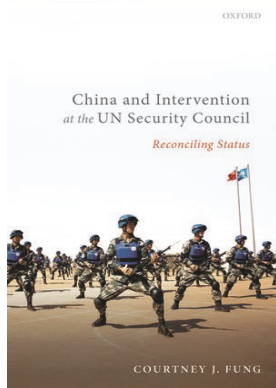
Public Lecture by Dr. Courtney Fung (Macquarie University) PBRC Distinguished Speaker

Thursday, March 10th, 2022 7:15 pm - 8:15 pm (PST)

Zoom Registration at www.soka.edu/pbrc-fung-reg

“China and the United Nations: A New Emerging Order?”

There is much interest of late in China's growing role at the United Nations: China is the second largest contributor to the UN regular and peace-keeping budgets; the largest peacekeeping troop contributor of the permanent members of the UN Security Council; holds multiple concurrent executive leadership positions within the UN system, and has signed a number of Belt and Road Initiative memorandum of understanding with a variety of UN bodies. There is an emerging public commentary that reflects concerns about China's rise in multilateral influence and what this means for international order. This talk takes an evidence-based approach to consider China's rise in historical context and discusses China's aspirations for global governance.



Courtney J. Fung is Associate Professor in the Department of Security Studies & Criminology at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. She is concurrently Associate in Research at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard University and also Associate Fellow in the Asia-Pacific Programme at Chatham House. Courtney is author of *China and Intervention at the UN Security Council: Reconciling Status* (OUP, 2019).

PBRC Symposium on “Natural Playscapes, Ecological Literacy & Outdoor Education” is to be held in September 2022!

Dr. Deike Peters, PBRC Faculty Fellow 2021-22, will lead the symposium based on her research project which focuses on access to nature for low-income and minority students and inclusivity in Outdoor Education. The overall scope of the research is outdoor education programming for school age children, with a specific empirical focus on efforts towards increased access and inclusivity in outdoor education program in (Southern) California. A key premise of the research remains the fact that children from lower education and ethnic minority backgrounds have significantly less access to outdoor education programs and opportunities, with negative consequences for their social and environmental literacy and even overall well-being. This “nature gap” is increasingly well recognized and documented and many outdoor educational institutions are presently seeking to rectify this inequitable situation.

Please stay tuned for more symposium details in coming months!



CONGRATULATIONS!

PBRC Student Essay Contest Fall 2021 Winners:

Joe Nicholls '21

“Modern and Contemporary Indigenous Music as Tools for Identity Reclamation and Cultural Support”

Kevin Chen '22

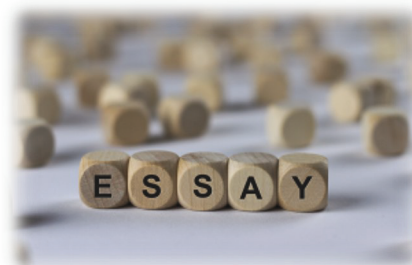
“US-China Trade War: Reasons and Effects”

Sachi Nishida '23

“State and Society in China”

Yixin Wang '23

“Human Rights Situations in Xinjian: A Comparative Study of Western and Chinese Narratives”



The winners' abstracts will be available on our new website soon!

ANNOUNCEMENT

PBRC Faculty Fellow Research Presentation

Thursday, April 21

7:15 - 8:15 pm (PST) via Zoom

Zoom Registration:

www.soka.edu/pbrc-research-lecture-reg

Dr. Sarah England (Anthropology)

"Finding Refuge from Racism and State Violence, or just More of the Same? The Impact of Obama and Trump Era Immigration Policies on Honduran Garifuna Asylum Seekers"



* Dr. Deike Peters' symposium will be held in early September 2022.

SUA Faculty Publications are displayed at the PBRC Library (Ikeda 457).
For more information on PBRC and SUA Faculty publications, visit:

<http://www.soka.edu/pbrc/research-and-publications/>

