



# TANGO

EXTRA

*Dancing with Words*

Senri & Osaka International Schools of Kwansei Gakuin

TANGO: Dancing with Words

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## *SOIS can Pioneer Gender Equality in Japan*

*by Yu Takahashi*

International Women's Day on March 8th, 2019, was celebrated globally as well as within the community of SOIS. There were meetings held to discuss women's rights and decorations to show the support for gender equality. There have been several teachers from OIS and SIS who have been contributing to this movement. However, looking at the broader picture of gender equality in the world, Japan ranked 110th in the Global Gender Gap Index released at the end of 2018. Out of the 149 countries, Japan scored extremely low on the gender equality especially in the area of politics and the economy<sup>1</sup>.

An SIS teacher, Ms. Saito, is concerned about working conditions in Japan. She teaches social studies at SIS and she is also the mother of three daughters. She is deeply aware of Japanese politics, economics and progress in relation to the world. From the perspective of Ms. Saito, although Japan has had some dramatic changes in the past fifteen years, the ideology of gender equality still has not become part of Japanese culture. She compared Japan to several European countries where women are more respected within the culture. For example, in Finland and France, women are more respected and many women are involved in the workforce in a wide range of fields such as politics, economics, arts and sciences. If Japan wants to become a country of gender equality, Ms. Saito says, allowing women into diverse jobs would cultivate the soil for women to succeed, and as a result, it would encourage more women to be involved in politics as well.



Photo by Dave Algie

Furthermore, women living in Japan face many challenges in the workplace. Ms. Saito shared an account of her friend who resigned from a job. In her friend's case, she was struggling to have a child and she was taking a fertility treatment with her partner. After a while, she felt pressured at work for being late or absence due to the fertility treatment and she resigned. From Ms. Saito's perspective, she genuinely feels that there are always obstacles for women living in Japan.

Moreover, there is also a mindset within Japanese language and culture which inhibits respect for women. For example, there is a word "Mazacon (Mother-complex)", which is used to mock men or boys who love their mothers. In Japan, it is culturally unacceptable for men to love the women who gave birth to them. Hence, Ms. Saito pointed out the

lack of respect for women is exacerbated by the words which have a negative connotation related to disrespect for women. Additionally, there is a word "Rikejo", which refers to girls pursuing a scientific career. This word derives from a stereotype that science is only for men. Unfortunately, these words are used casually and without any shame because they are accepted within the already established culture.

Still, Ms. Saito sees the possibility to transform gender equality in Japan through education. She is proud of SOIS for having a very positive attitude towards gender equality. The teachers, students and parents are highly aware of this concept despite the fact that the school is located in the country that placed 110th in the Global Gender Gap Index, Ms. Saito referred to SOIS as a "pioneer" of gender equality in Japan, with a hope that the future generation can make a change in Japan regarding gender equality



[Image design by Lisa Donovan, 2017.](#)

***More Hard-hitting Articles Inside!***

### ***"Proud to be Feminists"***

Ms. Cheney talks with Tyus Sheriff about feminism in Japan and around the world, and how she sees feminism growing in a positive way here at SOIS. Page 2-3

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<sup>1</sup> Global Gender Gap Report World Economic Forum 2018.

# "Proud to be Feminists"

## An Interview with Ms. Cheney by Tyus Sheriff

Q: On March 8, our school celebrated International Women's Day. Why is this day important and what does it mean to you?

A: IWD is important because across the globe we need to recognize that women are equal to men. IWD is important to help recognize that equality helps raise the standard of living for everyone.

Q: Would you personally call yourself a feminist?

A: Yes.

Q: And what do you think feminism is?

A: Advocating female rights on the basis of equality of the sexes.

Q: Many people hold values such as gender equality and equal treatment but are reluctant to label themselves as "feminist" because they think that it carries a sort of negative connotation or that it implies female superiority or that men's issues are ignored. How would you respond to such people?

A: I'd point out that feminists are not misandrists; they don't hate men. So, feminists only want equality— they just want fair treatment, as we say in Australia, a "fair go".

Q: Some say that, at least legislatively, women in most developed countries have equal rights as men. So, do you think that the women's rights movement and feminism still have a place in the developed world or do you think that efforts should be more focused on the developing world where sexism is much more obvious or blatant?

A: I think it's important in all countries that there is legislation that mandates equality of the sexes. Legislation is a really important component to have, but for equality to really happen it has to be accepted by society. Many countries, while they have legislated for equality and it becomes against the law to discriminate on the basis of sex, haven't been able to implement these laws successfully. Some societies or segments of societies are not ready to treat all people equally.

This is an issue for Japan as it has most of the legislation in place for equality to occur, but elements of Japanese society do not accept that women are equal. This is particularly evident in the Diet with only one woman in the ministerial cabinet. Sexism in Japan has a huge economic cost. There is a willing and educated workforce of women in Japan who are often relegated to part-time, mind numbing jobs with little chance of promotion. Womenomics and "letting women shine" have been rhetoric during political campaigns but in reality there is not enough funding to increase desperately needed daycare positions and little in the way of government programmes to encourage men to be active participants in household duties.

Q: So, how do you think that you can get society to a point where it can actually have these policies have an effect?

A: Education. Educate Japan's youth to expect to be treated equally and fairly. It's unfair to expect Japanese society to have equality overnight just because it has legislation about equality. An education system that promotes equality has not been a priority in Japan. Countries dependent on multiculturalism and immigration have had to legislate for racial tolerance as many are first settlers, immigrants or refugees – there are often few native inhabitants left. With this general necessity to be racially tolerant comes an exposure to equality and the expectation that all people would be treated equally. So, I think it's unfair to expect that Japan would be at the forefront of the world on the issue of equality of the sexes because it is not something instilled in the education system or within a homogenous society.

Having said that, though, when you look at imperial succession to the throne, there's been the case since ancient times of empresses on the throne. The current abdication of the emperor and the new emperor coming in next month, will take the sacred jewel (*Yasakani no Magatama*), the mirror (*Yata no Kagami*) and the sword (*Kusanagi no Tsurugi*) from Ise (*Grand Shrine*) and then the new emperor is enthroned. This shows the divine link between Amaterasu, the goddess that created the Japanese archipelago, and the emperor's family. There in itself, "the goddess", the female— that ancient history of equality has always been in Japan but in modern times Japan does not reflect this equality. I read on the weekend that the term "Sensei" means your life comes before mine— not just "one who comes before" that is an interesting translation.

A: Oh, really?

A: In Kyoko Mori's book "Polite Lies" she says the literal translation is not just respect; it's actually, "your life is more important than my life". This is just one of many examples about how there are very different expectations, in Japan and Asia in relation to how people are treated. A Confucius background of filial respect has an impact on how far a society can achieve equality, if that is what the society truly wants. This is evident in the current education system and in societal expectations that equality of the sexes is not a priority in Japan – hopefully this will change to benefit all Japanese.

Q: More from an international scale, I think since the latter half of the 1900's the women's rights movement was much more focused on gaining the bare-bones of equal rights— things like getting the power to vote. In today's world, what do you think the modern issues are that the women's rights movement is tackling?

A: The "Me Too" movement has highlighted a lot of problems that have needed addressing in relation to sexual-harassment, and this movement is becoming pervasive across the world - not just in Hollywood. Even though the "Me Too" movement wasn't readily accepted in Japan, it still had some impact here, where more women came forward e.g. the attack of journalist, Shiori Ito. But I think it's the task of modern feminists to really tackle the insidious sexism that comes on a day to day basis in how society expects women to live their lives compared to how society expects men to live their lives. For instance in regard to basic domestic duties, we know that in many countries that women spend many more hours looking after the home, many more hours devoted to childcare and many more hours supporting their husbands compared to husbands supporting their wives – this inequality makes it impossible for the "average woman" to have an equal chance at career success. The majority of women simply don't have the same amount of time as men to devote to their own career advancement.

Considering all the negative and positive aspects of Mao's China, one aspect that really helped the majority of Chinese women was the communal cafeteria and communal daycare. From feudal persecution to communal living, Chinese women understood that both food and children needed to be taken care of to be able to work. Of course Mao personally treated women abysmally and with a capitalistic economy female infanticide and sex trafficking are on the increase. So, the feminist movement needs to focus on these very basic, every day issues that women across the planet face. Of course sexual-harassment needs to be stopped and it is being addressed, especially in countries like India where we see many groups fighting back against the horrific attacks on women. However, everyday equality of the sexes needs to be treated as a number one concern or otherwise societies can accept such things as insidious "Soft Family Mart Porn" as the norm – that commodifying and objectifying our Japanese sisters, mothers, aunts, daughters, girlfriends is OK. When this desensitization of society occurs then a "new norm" is established and this acceptance further degrades women and widens the gap between the sexes.



Q: Would you say you're optimistic about the future of women's rights?

A: I think, naturally, feminism will progress and that equality of the sexes has to occur for societies to truly progress. I am optimistic. I see feminism permeating different societies and our own school community. Male students are increasingly proud to call themselves "feminists" as they know that equality of the sexes is fair, just and will bring them a better standard of living. Progress in equality of the sexes is being made slowly in Japan, often despite the politicians sexist, repugnant gaffs. Given a fair chance, women will advance because they are excellent in their chosen field, because they comprise approximately 50% of the population, because there will be greater enforcement of equality of the sexes legislation and most importantly because eventually, all societies will see equality of the sexes as normal.

**Pictured Right:** Shapers of the world, not just for tomorrow, but for today. Ms. Cheney (Far right ) with some of our young leaders.



## Are Male Teachers in Elementary Becoming a Thing of the Past?

by Ximing Pan

On November 2018, EuroScientist posted an article titled "Male Elementary School Teachers in Extinction".<sup>1</sup> While this concept might seem absurd, UNESCO's data shows that there is a steady increase in the percentage of female teachers in primary education around the world. The most recent data shows that 65.73% of primary school teachers are female. There is a continuing overall downward trend in numbers of male teachers.<sup>2</sup>

One reason for this impending "extinction" is the attitude towards men having a career in primary education. Society's viewpoint towards an elementary school teacher is a more "nurturing role" that is stereotyped as a "feminine characteristic". As a result, male teachers are often discouraged from teaching primary students, and end up underrepresented in elementary school.

An interview with Mr. Jones gives us insight into the effect of gender stereotypes on men. Mr. Jones is currently the Grade 5 teacher at OIS. While he originally planned to be a high school PE teacher, he was inspired to work in elementary school after he spent a year as a special education assistant.

Throughout his career, Mr. Jones has found that some students take a little while to build a rapport with him, especially since he is often the first male teacher that they've had. However, students in his classes quickly realize that a male teacher can be just as capable of teaching and inspiring them in their learning.

Mr. Jones said that some people have questions over student safety in regard to male teachers. People are more likely to be concerned about the idea of male teachers being alone with students. Mr. Jones response is to be aware of these concerns and to follow sensible guidelines and protocols in dealing with students. By being careful in these ways, Mr Jones is able to create a learning environment in the classroom that students and their parents are really happy with.

Mr. Jones is a role model who shows OIS students that males AND females are both equally able to be great elementary school teachers.



<sup>1</sup> Eleftherios Baltzidis "Male elementary school teachers in extinction".EuroScientist 19 November 2018. <https://www.euroscientist.com/feminisation-elementary-schools/> Accessed 8 May 2019

<sup>2</sup>"Primary education, teachers (% female)" The World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.TCHR.FE.ZS> Accessed 8 May 2019.



## *OIS Grade 11 Volunteer Trip to Cebu by Tasuku Azuma*

Cebu is known for its beautiful turquoise seas and skies, making it a perfect travel destination for a holiday vacation. Recently, the number of Japanese visitors to islands of Cebu has steadily been increasing.

Similarly to previous years, we, the grade eleven students went to the islands of Cebu for our CAS service trip, unaware of the challenges as well as the excitement the trip was to bring us.

We took a 5 hour flight from KIX to Cebu Mactan international airport on March 13th. During the first half of the flight, many of us were constantly worried and frightened due to the continuous turbulence that swung the aircraft every which way. After the flight, we went to a nearby shopping mall, where some members of our class planned to exchange money. By the point we got to the mall, it was past eight. Unfortunately and unexpectedly the currency exchange was closed, leaving us to rely on a fraction of the class and Mr. Myers who had already exchanged money at the airport, to pay for the time being. The borrowing and lending of money continued until the second day because we visited a currency exchange in another shopping mall, but a larger mall than before.

On the second day, we went to a recreation centre *Papa Kitos*, where we had the choice to enjoy different types of activities including zip lining, horseback riding, and fishing. Then, we travelled to Ayalla shopping mall, which was much larger. It felt like I was navigating through a labyrinth, with my poor sense of direction. We had an early dinner and spent most of our time shopping and touring around.

The third day was when we finally started the service portion of the trip. At first, we travelled by van to Cebu International School, then split into three groups working on; making Onigiri at CIS, volunteering at IRO, and interacting with students in Pit-os national high school.

The first group faced several difficulties with different tools and inexperience, but managed to make around hundred Onigiri to donate to the Mandaue Umapad community, which we visited in the afternoon. The second group volunteered at the Island Rescue Organisation. Noah Izumi, who led this collaborative volunteer programme at IRO, summarises the activity as follows;

“As part of the service experience at Cebu a group of students volunteered at a local animal shelter run by the Island Rescue Organization. IRO is an animal welfare organization that has been working to care for and promote the humane treatment of animals in the Philippines since 2010. Students were able to interact with the incredible staff and many of the animals taken care of at the shelter, as well as take part in a feeding activity for the dogs. We were fortunate enough to have the founder of the organization, Ms. Nena Hernandez, come over and give us a compelling story of how the organization came to be. I hope that through the efforts of students in future service trips a meaningful relationship can be made with the IRO.”

The third group played basketball, Japanese games, such as Darumasan-gakoronda (Japanese equivalent to “What’s the time Mr Wolf?”), as well as unique games that Pit-os students came up with. We also donated books from the SOIS library. After having a lunch at CIS, we took a ride in the van again, to visit Mandaue Umapad community. We first donated rice, food and beverages from Jollybee, a fast food store of Philippines which we bought on the way, and onigiris we made. Then, we gave out the remaining food to those who did not receive one, by visiting each house in the community. Although we could only donate a one-time contribution, I felt that this served to start a meaningful communication with individuals of the community.

Around four, we left the community and returned to the hotel, to reflect upon and discuss about the initial thoughts about the day. In the discussion, each table shared their opinion on what they felt, especially at the Mandaue Umapad community. Some said, that the houses and the style of life was very different from that of ours, and perhaps of less luxury from a materialistic point of view. Another point that was noted was that we should not take our life for granted, for the significant number of people in the world who do not have access to things which we regularly use or experience.



On day four, we sailed to Caohagan island, where we engaged with children through playing games such as musical chairs, capture the flag, piñata, just to mention a few, until noon. We made Japanese-style chicken curry and served children in a primary school on the island. Working on construction was strenuous as we dug wide and deep holes and cut reinforcing rods, as a part of foundation work. While one group worked on construction, the other two groups either played with children, or cooked curry for lunch. It was laborious work cutting about ten kilograms of different parts of chicken meat into smaller pieces, trying to dissolve curry roux we brought from Japan, and cooking rice. Unfortunately, cooking took more time than we estimated, and we had to cancel cultural activities scheduled in the afternoon, and go straight to a restaurant for dinner. The restaurant was called Top of Cebu, and was literally situated on high ground, with a beautiful view of the city. The meal, coupled with the magnificent view, was indeed delicious. Day five had a similar schedule, except that recreation time was scheduled in the afternoon, where some of us swam, and dived while others relaxed, and slept, feeling a soothing sea wind.



On the last day, we checked into Shangri-la Resort in the morning, and treated ourselves to island-hopping. On the boat, we almost forgot the restraint of time, assignments and exams we were facing, and this allowed us to simply live in the moment. We also had an opportunity to try snorkeling. Attracted to the clear turquoise colour of the sea, almost the entire class swam. But, suddenly we were met with a school of small jellyfishes, stinging everyone’s body as they went past. We then changed the location to get away from jellyfishes, and continued to enjoy the free time. After returning back to the hotel, we still played in a pool, then had dinner and free time until late evening.

Looking back at how we made contributions to the communities in Mandaue and Caohagan, I personally think it was a great plan. The service trip was the same communities as the last year’s, paving a way for a more sustainable and continued support rather than simply giving temporary aid. But, I believe that this trip also has rooms for improvements. When we distributed foods at Mandaue Umapad community on day three, rice balls were not so popular, especially amongst young children. This made me realise that there is still need to work on identifying community’s needs, so that we do not end up giving unwanted donations when we could have



altered things slightly to make it meet people's needs. Another point to note is to focus on contributions that only high school students can make, or are good at. Working on the construction site probably did help the community, and so did the curry cooking, but any adults on the island could have done the same. To maximise the quality of contribution, it is important to keep the content of service within a high school students' area of expertise.

At one point in the trip, Mr. Mecklem asked us whether this trip was worthwhile, when we could simply donate the fee associated with this trip, to the communities we visited. From a pragmatic and materialistic perspective, this proposal could be considered the better solution. The trip, however, would be a meaningful investment, as Nanami Hasegawa said, if we were to take lessons from the experience of this trip, and connect it to our future actions. This way, the grade trip would serve as more than just a tourist trip for us.



Photos supplied by Tasuku Azuma

## ***"Crazy Amazing Memories"- OIS Snowboard Ski Trip*** by Janet Jones

This year, being in 9th grade, I chose to go on the North Star Camp located in the alps of Nagano, Japan. I chose to go on this camp mainly because of the memories that I have engraved into my brain back when I was able to go in 7th grade as a class, remembering the amount of fun I had.

To be honest, I could not choose one specific thing that we did during the camp this year that was a top memory because I feel that the whole trip was filled with crazy amazing memories. But some of the most memorable things we did were being able to go down the Quads (slopes) freely, the amount of fails that were captured on camera and the nights after getting back to the lodge after the day filled of snowboarding and skiing. After we had our snowboard or ski lessons, we were allowed to go down the courses found in the depths of the mountains and we were lucky enough to get the most perfect weather with the most soft and fluffy snow, being that it was already March. The hot food was a large part of why North Star will always be in our hearts, the food served by the heart-warming staff after a day filled with snow was almost too good to be true. The memory making did not end just on the alps but were also made from the second we woke up to the second before we blacked out after hitting the pillows.

When I was going down the Quads, I found that most of us in my group were near beginners but were able to be risk takers and headed down challenging the slopes. During exploring the mountains, there were countless amounts of specific memories that we made with the amount of fails that we all experienced, which were hilarious. However, while we were on the slopes, it was almost like most of us had changed personalities because of the amount of care we had for each other, making sure that each one of us were not left behind or hurt. This type of care that shone through most of us created an unforgettable atmosphere between the two grades that I think will be a memory most of us will keep for the rest of our lives.

I think that this camp truly allows you to talk and make memories with people who you would never talk to at school, whether it may be because they are in a different grade or you think that you have different interests to you, but through this trip I have discovered that a lot of us have some sort of similar interest that was shown

through the free time that we were given. Most of the students from the three grades spent their time socializing and playing non-electrical games, such as cards, ping-pong and foosball. I think that by experiencing these non-electrical old fashioned games that a lot of us are not used to, being the millennial generation, many of us were given a chance to create proper, real memories though all the talking and laughing.

I am definitely going to go next year, especially after the amount of memories that I was able to make with my friends and also people who I would usually not interact with if it were not for this camp and hopefully next year will be as good as the experience this year.



Photo supplied by Janet Jones



## Bicycle Camp by Yoshi Kamegai

The bicycle camp was a three-day camp in which twelve students and three teachers went on a ride of 150 km over two days along the Shimanami Kaido from Onomichi to Imabari and back. Although the group was expecting a rainy day on the ride going to Onomichi, the weather turned out well, with no sign of rain at all for the entirety of the trip.

We hired our bikes at the Giant store, and in light of the rental cost, the bicycles were in great condition. The service provided by the company deeply impressed me.

The first day was all about getting everything set up, with the second and third days being the day on which the group rode along the Shimanami Kaido. Everyone had a free choice for all of their meals and the breakfast of the second day was served by the lodge the group stayed in. Both hotels were clean and fancy and allowed bikes to be stored inside the room both days which was amazing service considering many hotels would not allow that.

The greatest experience of the trip was descending downhill for approximately two kilometers. This happened after the long hill climb. We were able to descend the same amount that we had climbed. Hills were climbed to get to the top of the bridge and as the reward for the climb was the cool breeze that came through. Then, awaiting, was the downhill that led to sea level where each rider could find themselves right beside the water.

The main highlight of the trip was the 6-kilometer bridge which was so long it seemed as if the road would go on forever. Riding high above the water with the wind and alongside other riders was a great experience. It also brought joy to those who saw this as the end of their first day of riding and that their long-awaited dinner was coming right up. In fact, it was not just one bridge but many bridges that we as a group passed, and unlike what would normally be expected from riding along the sea, there were different elevations and angles of climbs as well as descents. After the trip on the way back to Osaka, many of the students said they had a great experience and that they would want to choose the bike camp next year as well.

For students currently in OIS 8 or 9, this will be one of their choices for the camp next year. Although 150 km may seem like an extremely long ride, many of us who joined the camp managed very well and had a wonderful time. The total time that was measured of riding was approximately three and a half hours, but the total time that took us including lunch was eight hours, showing all of the riders had time to rest and take their time in the ride slowly and steadily.

With marvelous experiences of feeling the wind and amazing views, this is one trip which does not require much strength and anyone who is interested in riding along with the wind is sure to enjoy their trip.



## Spotlight on Service

with Noah Izumi



### Volunteer Club

From ICT Conferences to volunteering at Ronald McDonald House, the Volunteer Club takes part in various service activities across Japan. The Volunteer Club serves as a gathering for students with a passion in service to share their experiences and partake in activities that others bring to the group.

In particular, the club places its strength in its involvement with the Junior Red Cross of the Japanese Red Cross Society, participating in activities and conferences, whilst building a relationship with participating members from different schools.

The Volunteer Club has a range of students from different grades, thanks to its friendly and welcoming atmosphere which many find easy to blend into. Students who join are free to pursue in a service activity of their interest, or expose themselves to a number of valuable activities that the club leaders and supervisor organize for the members.

If you're interested in this club, contact: Yu Takahashi (201087@soismail.jp), Goshi Tanaka (201064@soismail.jp), Ami Osaka (201051@soismail.jp), or Mr. Yoneda (kyoneda@soismail.jp)

### Noah's Ark

Noah's Ark SOIS is an animal welfare club that was established back in 2017 with the aim to raise awareness and educate not only the students at SOIS, but students of a wider international community in Japan about how problematic the issue of animal rights issues are in our current world. The club has strived to teach students how the protection of animals is crucial, not only for the animals but also for us as a societal value within our own communities. To gain a better understanding of animal welfare issues in Japan students volunteer regularly at Animal Refuge Kansai (ARK) and the Japan Rescue Association (JRA), support these organizations through organizing fundraisers, and promote their activities. However, the club has started to move towards expanding beyond the scope of Japan, and as a recent activity, Noah's Ark organized a volunteer trip to an animal shelter in Cebu, Philippines for the Grade 11 Service Trip\*. It is the club's hope that students will be able to gain an insight into how animal welfare standards differ across varying cultures and communities.

If you're interested in this club, contact: Noah Izumi (202041@soismail.jp), Minami Matsushima (212008@soismail.jp), or noahsarksois@gmail.com

\*check Tasuku Azuma's article on pages 4 and 5 for more information.

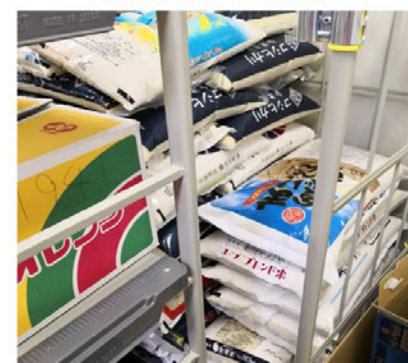
## Service Opportunities

### How Can I help?

- Open to Accepting Volunteers
- May benefit from translators to translate food drive promotion materials and perhaps translate sections of their website
- They are also looking for people who are willing to drive and distribute food to various projects around Osaka.

\*It is far, nearly 2 hours by train (1.5+ in a car) in Sakai  
<http://www.foodbank-osaka.jp/>

### Osaka Food Bank





ARK Camp by Minami Matsushima

“Even taking the smallest actions is better than doing nothing at all”

For our annual spring camp, 6<sup>1</sup> high school students attended the ARK camp. Though we call it the ARK camp, we volunteered at both the usual Animal Refuge Kansai (ARK) facility in Nose-cho, Toyono district as well as the Japan Rescue Association (JRA) near Itami Airport over a course of three days.

The first day was slightly nerve-racking, as we started off with a beautiful combination of extremely strong winds and trains breaking down, coincidentally resulting in literally every single possible route to our first ever volunteer date at JRA being blocked. Nonetheless, with the help from the more calm and cool-headed individuals of the group<sup>2</sup> we were able to get there safely on time.

On time [*idiom*] (nevə 'hap(ə)nz)  
Give or take 30 minutes. Or a bit more.

Despite the difficulties we encountered, we were welcomed by very friendly staff members and dogs at the JRA. JRA is an NGO that focuses on interacting with dogs through three main branches; disaster relief, therapy, and welfare. The organisation engages in training search dogs to send to both national and international relief efforts after disasters, providing therapy dog visits to nursing homes, hospitals, and schools, and rescuing abandoned and abused dogs, providing them with loving and caring homes. They made sure we were able to experience all three of them during the day. We even got free まさか!の時の「まさか飯」, and it tasted as flavourful and strong as its impactful name. We played with the dogs, fed them, walked them, washed them, and did office work as well.

It was very interesting to observe how different the animals in the different sectors were. While the large and powerful dogs in the disaster relief facility seemed to enjoy barking VERY loudly and frequently — as well as shaking off every single drop of water into Ouka, Jiyun, and Hyon Joo’s faces — while we were washing them, the smaller dogs in the therapy and welfare sectors were much quieter. Personally, it broke my heart to see how differently the dogs in the animal welfare facilities reacted to humans; they were clearly badly abused and mistreated in the past. The animal welfare dogs were clearly frightened and intimidated, refusing to come near us, especially if there were more than one person in the same area, for at least the first 30 minutes. In contrast, the therapy dogs were more than happy to cuddle all of us, including Aoto and Mr. Algie<sup>3</sup>, and one of them literally refused to leave Ms. Vogel’s lap. To me, they seemed to symbolise and represent how sweet and soothing dogs can be to humans when we reciprocate their love, instead of making them fear and mistrust us by maltreating them.

On the second and third day, we went to the ARK shelter like the previous years. “ARK is a NPO that aims to form a network of people who love animals, believe in sharing their lives with them, and who work actively to rescue them from suffering.” We mainly walked dogs at the ARK shelter, but more experienced members also had got to wash the dogs’ blankets and dishes, clean their kennels, and laundry as well!

Going to ARK always reminds me about how one unfortunate experience with a bad owner has the ability to affect the dogs’ lives forever. Although the puppies are generally playful, and would enthusiastically attack you with frisky jumps every time you enter the room, the dogs that have experiences of getting abused by past owners are more wary, and would even bite or try to run away when approached by humans<sup>4</sup>. However, it was really heartwarming to see the same dogs eventually start trusting us bit by bit by the second day.

The camp itself was enjoyable and we also had great chaperones. Here are some Mr. Algie quotes from the trip, testament to the former:

“You thought you were going to be on a camp to pet dogs but no, it’s all a ploy to get you to start writing for Tango.”<sup>5</sup>  
“Mr. Routh is my mortal enemy.”<sup>6</sup>  
“Save me, Minami!”<sup>7</sup>

If anyone’s interested, I strongly recommend volunteering at ARK or JRA. Noah’s ARK club usually organises at least one trip per month, so there’s plenty of opportunities available at OIS, and it’s really worth it. Supporting these animals and giving them the life they deserve begins from actions like volunteering at the shelter for a day, spreading awareness, and adopting them, and even the smallest actions are better than doing nothing at all.



Photos by Dave Algie

<sup>1</sup> 10+ students signed up. We had to reduce it to 8. Then two 10th grade boys decided they’d be better off staying in school for the three days, and complaining about not being able to go despite declining the positions.  
<sup>2</sup> Literally everyone but me.  
<sup>3</sup> The two of them obviously being two of the most cuddly and huggable people in existence.  
<sup>4</sup> In the case of running away from the Taiwanese film crew, I joined the dog in bolting away.  
<sup>5</sup> Guess it worked...?  
<sup>6</sup> Better without context.  
<sup>7</sup> Sorry for chasing you with the dog.



# Lost and Found Inventory: A Fifth Spring Camp Option?

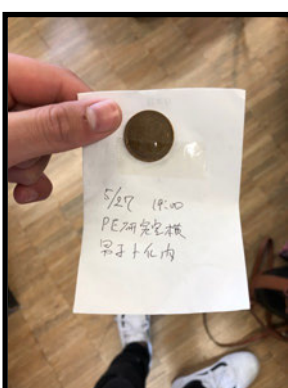
by Joshua Clifton

After nobly offering to sacrifice their place on the Animal Refuge Kansai (ARK) Spring Camp, due to an immeasurable amount of kerfuffles and cacophonous discussions with the SOIS ARK, Joshua Clifton (OIS 10) and Euan Lewis (OIS 10) were presented with an exclusive, alternative Spring Camp activity; cleaning out and organising the SOIS lost and found. While some may argue that walking dogs and picking up dung is more enjoyable than labelling dusty objects, the two boys would beg to differ. For three days, they would take photos of, and categorise, various properties, and enter them into an online database, for SOIS students and faculty to use. While they boys weren't initially eager about this project, and they did not believe this could be better than going to ARK, you'll soon find out that they were wrong.

The start of the boys' spring camp was tumultuous. As soon as they walked into the classroom in which they were to organise lost objects, the first thing they noticed was the fact that they grossly underestimated the amount of lost property they were to sort out into categories. They also underestimated the amount of dust that coated the jackets that are surely now too small for the owners. As one would expect from two teenage boys, the two were slow to start, although it would not be unreasonable to attribute this to Joshua's dust allergies acting up, and Euan showing up an hour late, at 10:00 AM. After Josh used up the last of the tissues in his trusty tissue pouch, and all the powder in his asthma inhaler, the duo got to work taking photos of all the lost property that were to be entered into an online database, while categorising them into boxes. They tirelessly passed numerous objects underneath a camera, snapped a photo, and categorised them, the only thing keeping them from burning out from boredom being music.<sup>1</sup>

At 12:00, the two heard a low, grumbling noise. They initially thought there was a live rodent living in one of the boxes, or some funky beat used in Macklemore's *Thrift Shop*, only to realise that the noise was Euan's stomach clock going off. They needed lunch. Before the hungry teenagers left to go buy the cheapest burgers they could find, they counted the number of boxes they organised within the two hours they were working. They had organised one out of twelve. They needed lunch *and* help. Like many SOIS students, they wished to go to Starbucks to blow off some steam<sup>2</sup>, but unfortunately, a chicken-veggie wrap was out of their budget, forcing them to walk further down the main road, to Mos Burger.

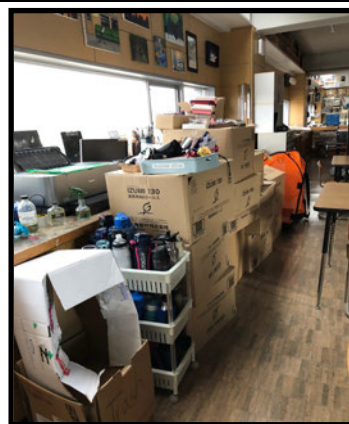
Despite eating a sophisticated three course meal, consisting of fries, burgers, and pepsi, the two were still starving, and decided to pick up their favourite 塩小野切り (salt rice balls) from a 7-11. While walking through the potato chip aisles, the two stumbled upon a very appetising pepper-salt flavour potato chip, as well as Reina Hara (SIS 11). They boys decided to recruit Reina to help them with their menial labour.



A single ¥10 coin

and Euan were acting like... Well, themselves.

After hours and hours of taking photos, organising a never-ending line of objects, the trio were done. Reina was especially *done* with taking care of two hyperactive boys. They moved all the boxes down to the office, exported all the



A whole buncha boxes

photos, and Josh and Euan decided to meet at 9:00 at Josh's house the next day, to enter the photos into a database.

As Josh expected, Euan showed up late. Three hours late. The two started, regardless of Euan's tardiness, to enter the photos into an online database. This consisted of finding the name, brand, colour, and approximate size of every item in every photo. The boys split the photos up evenly, but as punishment for his unpunctuality, Euan was forced to take more than half the photos; three-fourths, to be exact. They sat for seven, tireless hours, in front of their computers, legs under a kotatsu, silently entering information gathered from hundreds of lost objects. Perhaps the most interesting part of this ordeal was when Euan thought the kotatsu wasn't working because his feet were cold, while his feet were outside of the kotatsu.<sup>4</sup> At around 6:30, the boys were done inputting all, and any, meticulous information. They had completed the project.

Because OIS is obligated to provide three days worth of activities, the boys' supervisor, Mr. Lewis, allowed them to work on their Friday Flex presentation on the third day. While Josh was trying his hardest to get a video completed, he realised that he had not taken any videos, nor any photos, during the past two days, except from his saved Snapchat stories. He was forced to resort to exporting all his snapchat stories, along with Euan's, and created a video using iMovie. While looking over the footage, the boys could not help but feel a little reminiscent. The good times were coming to an end, and they had nothing physical to look back on; no videos, and no photos. Only their memories... But perhaps the great memories are all that matters.

During the process, the boys couldn't wait to get the job done, but in retrospect, after they were done, they wished there was more to do; they couldn't get enough of it. Perhaps this alternative project was better than going to ARK, after all.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Oh, how grateful we are for you, Macklemore.

<sup>2</sup>Yes, we know that we're basic.

<sup>3</sup>Two iPods, disabled for more than forty years, were found.

<sup>4</sup>This resulted in a massive scolding from Josh. To summarise the scolding: "BOI, u stupid"

<sup>5</sup>Make sure to check out the photos we took! Hopefully, you'll be able to find some of your lost stuff~



A lost nerf gun



A lost jacket

Timestamp	Item	Category	Photo or file	Returned to	Returned by	Edit ID
3/13/2019 18:23	slewis@soismail Shorts - Nike, blue and white	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/13/2019 18:24	slewis@soismail Training pants - Puma, blue and w	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/13/2019 18:26	slewis@soismail Long pants - blue	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/13/2019 18:28	slewis@soismail T-shirt - Blue Asics "never say nev	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/13/2019 18:28	slewis@soismail Hoodie - Champion, grey	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 8:16:1	slewis@soismail T-shirt - white, dog logo Japan Rei	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 8:17:0	slewis@soismail T-shirt - blue, California Venice Be	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:10:4	yozeki@soismail Watch - J-axis G	Watch		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:14:5	yozeki@soismail A shoe - Reebok	Shoes		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:15:5	nakade@soismail Earphones - app	Electronic		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:15:5	yozeki@soismail Bento box - Blue	Bento box		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:26:1	yozeki@soismail Pen case - Red	Pen case		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:28:0	yozeki@soismail Bracelet - Orange	Jewelry		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:28:4	yozeki@soismail Key - #43	Key		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 9:30:0	yozeki@soismail Hair pin - Pink flc	Accessory		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:27	212047@soismail Jacket - Tommy	Clothing	Jacket Rack	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:28	212047@soismail Jacket - Malibu, black	Clothing	Jacket Rack	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:28	212047@soismail Jacket, Browning, Blue	Clothing	Jacket Rack	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:29	212009@soismail Nike shorts, Black	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:31	212009@soismail Nike Black Trousers, Sweet pants	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:32	212047@soismail Nerf Gun, Modulus	Nerf Gun	Miscellaneous Box	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:32	212009@soismail Dark Blue shorts, Denim shorts	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:33	212009@soismail Baseball Cap - Camo	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:35	212047@soismail Jacket- Championship Grey	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:36	212047@soismail Jacket - Northface, black	Clothing	Jacket Rack	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:36	212009@soismail Baseball Cap- Polo Blue and Grey	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:37	212047@soismail Scarf - White, Black, Red	Miscellaneous		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:37	212009@soismail Baseball Cap - Camo	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:39	212047@soismail Shirt - RunLife	Clothing	Miscellaneous	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:39	212009@soismail Hat- Grey with bits of green and b	Clothing	Box 1	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>
3/14/2019 13:41	212047@soismail Jacket - Uniqlo, Black and Grey	Clothing	Jacket Rack	<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>		<a href="https://photos.go">https://photos.go</a>

Way too much lost property



Done Reina is DONE



## *Preparing for when a Disaster Strikes* by Antonio Kogata

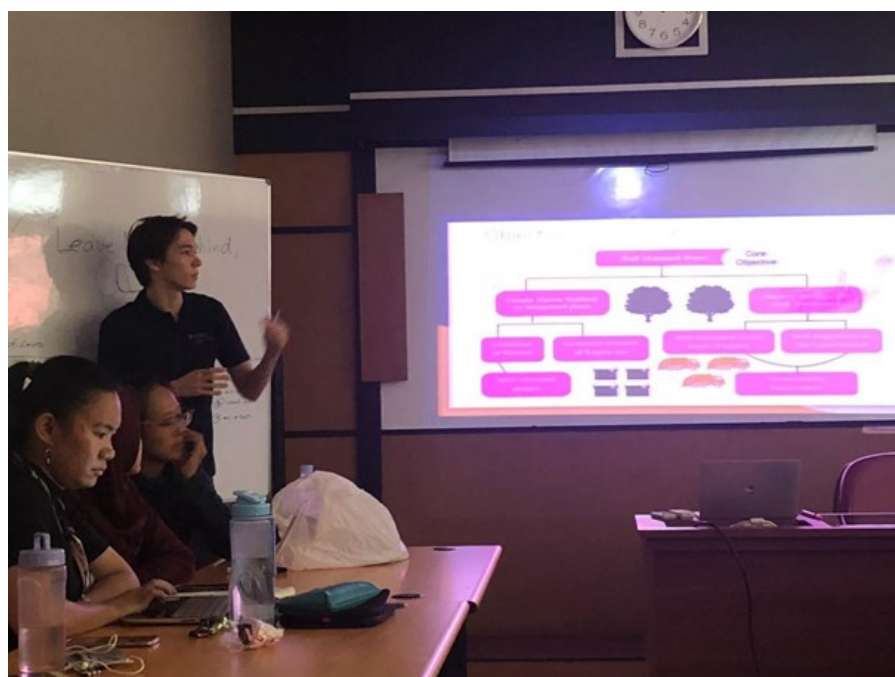
On the 24th of February I and three other Osaka University students travelled to Indonesia to study alongside Indonesian students to find ways of preventing further damage to Indonesia when a natural disaster such as an earthquake or a volcanic eruption occurs. This trip which was sponsored by the United Nations focused on 'sustainable development goals' which are 17 global goals set by the UN to be achieved by the year 2030. Our goal for this trip was to create a presentation and present it in front of donors (Project Cycle Management) that would help fund or donate money to Indonesia when a disaster strikes.

On the first day, we arrived at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta (central Indonesia) and were separated into two groups (mixing both Indonesian and Japanese students) familiarizing ourselves with the 17 SDGs and what our country related to the most. Some SDGs included were 'no poverty', 'gender equality' and 'climate action'. After familiarizing ourselves with these goals, our group had to identify which issue Indonesia faced with the most and how we could fix or prevent it from further occurring. Our group believed that having clean water, good health and wellbeing would be one of the most important things to work on as Indonesia has such a high poverty rate which causes countless deaths and damages when a disaster strikes.

For the next three days, the groups had to prepare a 45 minute long presentation to present in front of Indonesian donors who we had to persuade to fund Indonesian NGOs and aid them when a disaster strikes. This was the hardest task as it was extremely nerve wracking and were pressured to make the presentation as best as it could be in a short amount of time. Our presentation regarded waste and how unmanaged waste affects poverty, and increased number of deaths in poorer parts of Indonesia.

On the last day we had to present in front of two Indonesian donors regarding our issue of unmanaged waste and what we can do to prevent it. It was stressful. I remember stumbling on a few words and my mind becoming blank resulting in many 'uhhs' and 'umms' when it was my turn to speak. In the end however, it was successful as the donors agreed to donate a sum of money to NGOs in Indonesia that provide fresh water and shelter to regions that are prone to natural disasters. We received certificates for our hard work which was signed by the head teacher of both universities and a former UN disaster analyst.

Even though we could only join the course for five days, even in that short time the experience proved invaluable in my academic life. Of greatest importance was my engagement with Project Cycle Management as a means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals as these are the most relevant to be a future global leader in the pursuit of realistic change that will establish a sustainable environment within changing global societies.



This picture was sourced from the Gadjah Mada University website.





# ***Busy OIS Grade 10 Students Find Time for MUN Diplomacy***

*by Minami Matsushima*

The winter trimester was certainly not uneventful for the OIS 10 class.

More than half the class was involved in what turned out to be Ms. Cheney's favourite ASP of all time, *Shrek the Musical*, whether it was starring as the main cast, or translating all of Donkey's lines to make him refer to himself as おいら.

Pretty much the entire class was scrambling to make up for the months of procrastination that had cumulated in the seemingly sudden appearance of the personal project due dates as well. This obviously led to multiple cases of slow but steady mental disintegration for many, each occurring in the haven for all breakdowns; Starbucks.

We also had MUN.

Unlike previous years, we attended two MUN conferences this year instead of just the one in February annually hosted by Marist Brothers International School (MBIS.) Tyus Sheriff and Nanami Hasegawa from OIS 11 had organised an SOIS MUN conference held in January to prepare us for the MBIS conference, and to give opportunities for the entire OIS 10 class to participate rather than just the 10 students that get to attend the MBIS conference every year.

The highlight of the SOIS MUN Conference was definitely the unconventional manner in which the assembly reached a consensus for the emergency crisis after we had finished drafting resolutions for the two topics: 'Nuclear Disarmament' and 'Combating Disinformation'. As the delegates got ready to debate over the hypothetical maritime dispute between the U.S. and China in the South China Sea, the delegate of the U.S. suddenly stood up, and offered a few M&Ms to the delegate of China. He stated his willingness to pay all reparations and take responsibility for the issue, so long as China reciprocates. The delegate of China graciously accepted the priceless M&Ms presented to her with great largesse by the U.S. — clearly worth more than military dominance, honour, and hubris — and she consequently gave up China's claims over the territory. The crisis was no longer a crisis, and all it took was 5 M&Ms, and an open-minded and diplomatic mindset. Perhaps there are lessons that the current leaders of the world can learn from high schoolers.

A recurring complaint that one hears at every MUN conference is usually something along the lines of "I was just sitting there for three hours raising my placard in the air without getting called on, and it felt more like an arm workout than a diplomatic assembly." This was not an issue I personally faced, as I was fortunately the delegate of the United Kingdom for the SOIS MUN and then Japan for the MBIS MUN, both considered to be one of the 'influential' countries that the chairs usually prioritise and are biased for. Yet it was blatantly obvious that some delegates felt as though their countries were not as significant, and hence were less involved/related to the discussion at hand as a result.

“暇つぶし用のゲームとかあったらいいな。。。 もうルービックキューブでもいいから。” - Delegate of Egypt

“Trains.” - Delegate of Indonesia

“Some people are wasting their time right now, instead of actually doing things. You know?” - Delegate of Kazakhstan

“Wait...where's Dominican Republic?” - Delegate of the Dominican Republic

Then there was the MBIS MUN, where we debated not two, but four topics (River Pollution, Misinformation in the Media, Ageing Societies, and Healthy Eating) over a course of three days. And if you thought you didn't get called on enough during the SOIS MUN — well. You REALLY had to try this time.

Nonetheless, the three days at MBIS were extremely inspiring, enjoyable, and *definitely* filled with fruitful and constructive debates in order to craft resolutions pertinent

to the issues at hand. I had my fair share of diplomatic moments (including getting shot down every time I offered a solution for ageing societies — “clearly none of Japan's solutions are working” — and having the delegate of DPRK stand up during my speech as he felt “personally attacked and unfairly insulted” at my comments. Which wasn't intentional. Well. Okay, you can't expect no one to respond when you say the best solution to ageing societies is just letting everyone die and funding the army (?) to help. Anyways.

The things we learnt for and from MUN clearly connected and extended beyond the classrooms and the MBIS cafeteria into the larger world. We had the Danish hotdog man in front of Suma Station talk to us for an extended period of time about how refugees and the Middle East crises were affecting his country during lunch. Interesting, but we were starving.

“I'm hungry.” - Delegate of Denmark trying to eat a Danish hotdog.

Perhaps every OIS participant's favourite moment was the panicked parliamentary procedure meeting the chairs called for after a rather jingoistic outburst emotional expression of patriotism from our very own delegate of Venezuela. The delegate had received a warning as a result of yelling a very sudden and impassioned “Viva La Revolucion!” to conclude his calm and diplomatic speech.

Exclusive interview with the delegate of Venezuela:

“What caused your legendary outburst during the assembly?”

“When I was sitting there in the GA I knew I had to make a statement. Something that people would remember. I think the amount of research I did resulted in me becoming brainwashed by months of Chavez and Maduro rhetoric — I guess I they convinced me and I felt a sudden surge of patriotism.”

“What thoughts were racing through your head during that time?”

“Among many expletives running through my head and some that slipped out, I could feel the eyes of a hundred people seated behind me at the back of my head. It was pretty awkward but I'm glad all that happened was a warning.”

“Any regrets...?”

“I wish I would have said something else or something quieter because it cost me an award so there's that.”

MUN 2019 was a great experience, and a rare opportunity for us to utilise diplomacy and critical thinking both inside and outside the classroom. We all felt as though we understood why Ms. Cheney keeps on talking to us about how we need to utilise our unique positions as students in an international school to critically appreciate the many different cultures and beliefs that can coexist in our world. Thank you, Ms. Cheney, for guiding and helping us through everything.

Perhaps this was the first step in one (or all) of us eventually solving all of the global issues that exist in our world today.

“I liked it.” - Delegate of France



## SOIS Hosts Model United Nations Conference by Tyus Sheriff

Following last year's Model United Nations (MUN) conference with the International School of Asia Kuruizawa (ISAK), on January 11 and 12, 2019, SOIS hosted its second MUN conference. Along side SIS and OIS, Marist Brothers International School and the British School in Tokyo participated in the event.

Model United Nations is an academic competition and "simulation", in which students act as delegates to the United Nations for a particular country they are assigned to. They must follow their government's stance while collaborating with other delegates to craft resolutions for solve an array of international issues. At this conference, the prepared topics of discussion were "Nuclear Disarmament" and "Combating Disinformation", both highly pertinent to today's world.

The conference began on January 11, Friday. A total of about 40 delegates entered the theater for the Opening Ceremony, in which the Director of the United Nations Environment Office in Osaka, Dr. Keith Alverson, gave a speech about the importance of the environment and working to protect it. Delegates seemed intrigued by his speech and Dr. Alverson kindly answered some thought-provoking questions put forth by students. After an ice-breaker activity involving candy (specifically M&Ms), delegates entered smaller subcommittees to draft clauses on the issue of "Nuclear Disarmament". Upon submitting their finalized clauses, delegates entered the General Assembly to debate their resolution. Although students were at first hesitant to speak in front of the Assembly, as the debate progressed more and more voices were heard. The day culminated in a final vote on the resolution, in which an astonishing majority voted for the resolution to be passed.

On the second day, students entered the theater a bit tired from the previous day. The students, however, managed to engage in a lively discussion about the issue of "Combating Disinformation". Disinformation, as many may know, is highly relevant in the modern era, where people are susceptible to being misled by "fake news" propagated on social media platforms or even propaganda disseminated by governments. Therefore, the issue felt important during the assembly. There were many exciting clashes in the debate, with states such as Russia and North Korea arguing against many of the accusations and points forwarded by delegates. The General Assembly, however, concluded on a diplomatic tone with the resolution on "Combating Disinformation" passing.

After delegates came back from lunch, they were introduced to the emergency crisis scenario. The emergency crisis is a simulated "crisis" based on current events. The emergency crisis is not announced in advance, and is first revealed at the conference. At this MUN, the crisis scenario involved the collision of a Chinese warship and a U.S. commercial ship in disputed waters. Delegates were required to respond to the event and write a resolution to prevent the further escalation of conflict. Many delegates find this to be the most exciting part of MUN, as it adds a sense of urgency and importance to the conference. It is also much more impromptu, meaning delegates must think on their feet and act quickly to preserve peace. Although some parts of the General Assembly on the emergency crisis were seemingly unrealistic in the real world (the delegate of the U.S. attempted to reach a compromise with China by offering the delegate M&Ms), it concluded professionally, with a unanimous vote in favor of passing the resolution.

At the end of the conference, delegates were able to socialize and interact amongst one another. They took pictures, chatted, and enjoyed the food provided to them. Many spoke positively about the experience, and the British School in Tokyo was inspired by this MUN, planning to host their own in the fall.

On a personal note, this conference was organized by Nana-mi Hasegawa (OIS Grade 11) and I, and was a long time in the making. We started at the beginning of the school year and spent hours on end making sure the conference would

run smoothly. Although there were a few hiccups in the conference, we are grateful that it ended successfully. We would also like to thank Ms. Cheney and Mr. Sheriff for making this conference possible, as well as the school administration for their support. Seeing the delegates debate controversial issues with such professionalism and diplomacy was inspiring and I hope this reflects well on the future of, not only the United Nations, but our world.

We hope that this conference will be able to continue into the future and that more students will be able to become involved in the exciting world of MUN.



Photo supplied by Tyus Sheriff



## *ASP: The Director's Take* by Oka Maeda

I heard loud applause across the theater as the cast sang the last words of the song. The 2018 ~ 2019 All School Production, "Shrek the Musical" which took place in the school theater from February 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> ended with a great success.

The creation of this production started all the way back in late September, when this year's musical number was announced and the first meeting took place. I, as a new student director and stage manager was very anxious, since although I had some experience in assisting previous ASP performances, this was my first year handling the production all alone. However there were many encouraging cast members and backstage helpers around me, from people who were very experienced, to people for whom it was their first time.

The first and foremost problem that the ASP team and I came across was the ratio between the number of cast members and the number of practice days we had. Despite the fact that there were much more cast members than last year, with each of the actors playing a significant role, we lessened the number of days we practiced per week, hugely decreasing the overall number of sessions in practice. In previous years, three practice days per week until the winter holidays, and everyday after that was the usual, but this year, we only had three days practice throughout, sometimes two days. The upside to this was that we were able to manage our time and balance our schoolwork with the rehearsals. Nevertheless, less time to practice meant that more had to be done in one session, which was a challenge.

Another factor that was newly placed this year was having student choreographers instead of Sao Sensei, who had previously been coming up and teaching all the choreography. Because choreography plays such an important part of our production, putting all the responsibility on just a few students was a worry at the beginning, but the final performances proved that there was nothing to be concerned about. In fact, the choreographers did much more than their original job, and became our dragon handlers as well as reliable backstage helpers.

Until the winter holidays began in December of 2018, my major responsibility was to take notes (such as the producer's feedback on the casts' performance) during all the practices. However, something I challenged myself to do new this year that Mia had not done before was to put together digital notes after each practice per scene and to upload it in the ASP website for the cast members and teachers to see. Even though somedays I was very exhausted at the end of the day, or had various other school assignments to complete, by making digital reviews not only allowed me to gain a sense of satisfaction that I was able to help the others, but was able to go over what has been done during that practice session.

The practices after the New Years was a lot more busy. The cast members started practicing on stage without a script, the art department began to bring down newly made props, and costume people came to do costume fittings. As mentioned earlier, because we had limited amount of time compared to prior years, I made up by coming to school early in the morning, and staying late (sometime even after six o'clock) to finish the lights, organizing the props, etc. The main cast also gave up some of their free time to make this performance an amazing one. They often came to school before eight to practice scenes that they had difficulties blocking out the day before, and polishing the scenes that they were already confident in. By doing so, it built up more stronger bonds between each other, and made their performances more unique and original.

Just as everything seemed to go smoothly and perfectly, our team encountered another problem: the influenza. Every year from December to February, the influenza virus hits its peak, and many of the members suffered from this. Although some of the rehearsals were very difficult to run with a lot of absences, this year we were lucky to have everyone perform on stage in the show.

All of these problems and challenges took us quickly to our performance day and I found myself running around everywhere, going over the lights, sounds, making sure that the props and sets were in the right place, everyone was ready, etc.

Other members of my backstage helpers were very trustworthy and worked really hard as well, asking me if there was anything they could do to help. Because everybody came together as one, I

believe that the four shows we performed on stage turned out to be an amazing one and unforgettable for the audience.

I am just so glad that the performances went well, and proud that I was part of this production team. Lastly, I would like to thank Mr. Ligon, Ms. Namba, and Mr. Nicholl for having me as the student director / stage manager, all the cast members and backstage stage helpers for fulfilling their role, and the audience for coming to watch our show.





## ASP: Tales From the Pit

by Emily Yoo

"It is my very humble opinion that the pit is the most overlooked and under appreciated aspect of ASP. You might argue that no one could call such an integral part of a musical production "overlooked", and surely other areas such as backstage managers are far more overlooked. While it is true that the work of any backstage management can never be more appreciated, in the words of my friend, Minami Matsushima, or as I like to call her, the entire woodwind section, "If we [the pit] are good, then nobody notices because that's supposed to be normal, and if we suck then that's all anybody talks about." The effort taken to learn and perfect all the music is, in my opinion, at times taken for granted. For example, we were inadvertently left off an email that announced the availability of tickets to the ASP crew.

Nevertheless, the pit members, especially the conductor, put their all into performing the one of the largest Broadway scores that the school has ever staged, and despite being part of a sometimes overlooked aspect of ASP, I did enjoy working with the pit, and got to witness a few legends in the making.



This first story is not really a 'story', but more a collection of events, failures, and accidents regarding specifically the rhythm section. For those unenlightened, the rhythm section contains the drums, piano, guitar, electric bass, and other miscellaneous percussion. From the start, the rhythm section of this year's ASP was basically falling apart. To begin with, two drummers had signed up for the part, but one decided, on the first day of practice, that he no longer wanted to participate. This meant that we had no one that had practiced act one of the musical on the drum set on the first day of practice, when we were starting act one. Needless to say, this would have been a major problem if not for a strange pattern of god-like percussionists being present each year of ASP. Following the previous year's last minute pianist, who filled the absence of the 'official' pianist when she decided to ditch one month prior to the start of the shows, this year's Kodai Hara managed to sight read the entirety of act one on the first day of practice, and also managed to be the best part of the pit throughout all of practice. Unfortunately, the rest of these mishaps were not so easily resolved. Owen Mecklem, our guitarist, was involved in a bicycle accident and fractured his hand very late into practice, meaning that a huge part of the rhythm section that also happened to involve several solos would be completely missing from the pit. His parts were frantically shifted to various areas of the pit, and I myself barely got his part together on the piano before the first show. Not to mention, the entire percussion section was absent for the first half of practice, as no one had signed up for it initially, but thankfully the role was filled competently and quickly. Other small events of mild stress to extreme terror also include: the piano solo that I didn't know I had in the 'showstopper' piece of the musical, eventually having to be filled with additional string parts, Mr. V's late entry into practice, and having to program like 70 different sounds into the keyboard and frantically switching them whilst playing. Thank god the rest of the pit was competent.

The next 'tale from the pit' is considerably more juvenile, which might be more fitting considering the caliber of humor present in this musical. As you might be aware, the scene in which Shrek and Fiona begin to fall in love takes the form of a full minute of fart and burp sound effects at the start of act two. Of course, it was necessary to test these sounds before the start of the show, but this test happened to coincide with the pit's sound test, specifically when the conductor was attempting to give us notes on specific areas for caution. This resulted in multiple interjections of farts and burps from a loudspeaker that was positioned directly in front of the pit. After several attempts to muffle the sound using a cardigan, Ms. Deklinski was forced to give up, and the pit was subjected to a barrage of farts and burps before we were able to resume practice, which was far less entertaining than it sounds. I'm glad you enjoyed this scene, Mr. Algie, so that there was at least some meaning to our collective suffering.



Last, but most certainly not least, the dragon incident. If you didn't see the final performance of ASP, I must inform you that, unfortunately, you missed the greatest recovery and most entertaining 'musical fail' that I have ever witnessed. The dragon character, played by Ai Tomioka and several dragon handlers, had managed to make it through 3 of 4 shows without any accidents, which was a miracle if you ask me, but on the final night it happened. One dragon handler fell backwards into the pit, landing directly on top of our drummer and the wind chimes in the most dramatic way possible. Understandably, every member of the pit, including the conductor, stopped in shock. Every member, that is, but the drum player, the victim of this incident. Despite the fact that there was an entire person basically stepping on his head, he didn't miss a beat, and due to his complete lack of a reaction the entire production was able to pick itself back up in an instant. The actors continued as if nothing had happened, the dragon handler was helped up, and the pit picked the music back up. The rest of act one continued without incident, and the final performance was, on the whole, very much a success. The dragon incident will live on in infamy, hopefully to be retold each new year of ASP to remind everyone that, no matter what happens, the show must go on.

So, what's the purpose of telling of this little anthology? To stop constant pit abuse? To shed light on a unique perspective of ASP that should have been shown earlier? Or just to entertain the three people who read Tango. Whatever the reason, I hope you gained something from this article, whether it's a newfound appreciation or (hopefully) a reason to join the pit next year. Here's to hoping all of the next year's ASP issues are at least entertaining as this year's.





## うどん - *Udon* by Sana Konishi-Attwood

Being a quick, cheap and delicious meal, Udon is one of our most popular menus in our school cafeteria. You have probably purchased it at least once in your time here at SOIS (if not, you are missing out on a lot), but let me ask you a question; have you ever stopped and thought about some of the names these Udon have? "Kitsune Udon" – literally meaning "Fox Udon". "Kake Udon" or in other words "Tanuki Udon" – again, "Japanese raccoon dog Udon". (Before any confusion, outrage, or disappointment, the cafeteria in our school does not serve fox or raccoon meat) The Udon seemed to have no correlation to these names whatsoever, but in fact they had some interesting backgrounds as to how they were named like so.

The first Udon I looked into was Kitsune Udon- the Fox Udon. The typical Kitsune Udon would be fried tofu (Aburaage) seasoned with sugar, mirin and soy sauce on top of a regular Udon. There are a few ideas about where this name came from. One, simply because the fried tofu looks like a fox curled up in its cozy sleeping position. Another is due to the unjustified hypothesis that foxes love the fried tofu (yet to be proven by a group of Himajins). So yes, the name of this Udon comes from an animal.

Tanuki Udon, to my surprise, did not follow the same pattern as the Kitsune Udon. Tanuki Udon (or Kake Udon in our cafeteria's case) includes bits of fried tempura batter on top of a regular Udon. The reason why it is called this is apparently due to the fact that the Tane (the ingredients of the Udon and the inside of

the tempura) isn't included, so it was called Tanenuki (ingredient-less), later to be shortened to be called Tanuki.

In these ways, simple things such as names for food we see every day can have some interesting backgrounds to them, and whether their names have connections with random animals or not, please – continue to give our love and support for the cafeteria Udon.



## "Seek Discomfort"

### *The Importance of Having Experiences Outside of School*

by Janet Jones

"Seek Discomfort", an expression, coined by Yes Theory from Youtube, that represents the concept of the importance of new experiences and taking a break from school. As a student approaching the IB diploma program, I often hear from the upper grades that the summer before 10th grade will be the last one to enjoy and how every summer until graduation will be filled with stressful days. Since I have yet not experienced highschool enough to understand the depth of this, I am not writing this from experience but with the slight taste of highschool after two trimesters of freshmen year, I can definitely say that these innuendos that the upper grades tell us are going to be true. However, as an experienced traveler through life, but not highschool, I can definitely recommend taking a break from the normalcy of day-to-day life to seek new experiences, whether it may be planned or spontaneous and whether it may be remote or nearby.

Grades are what many people live for, including myself, but it is also very important to rest the mind, whether it is from studies, social life or from the internet, which is something I can not say a lot about myself. It is extremely important to take breaks from ordinary life for the brain to be able to reset and for it to be able to access information at full power, similarly to sleep. As a student who most definitely does not have the best sleep schedule I will come across as a hypocrite but sleep is one of the best ways to improve in general at school because the right amount of sleep allows enough time for the brain to reorganize and embed the days information, which will help with memorization.

Now moving on from the boring stuff and to the importance of taking a break from school to travel. I feel that traveling is one of the best ways to create memories and expand your knowledge about the world. As our school is an international school, students must have an understanding of diverse races and ethnicities, therefore traveling is a great way to expand on world cultures. Personally getting out of the country gives me immense motivation to do more in life, opening my eyes for me to further become open minded international citizen, which allows me to notice that the choices made now have a great impact for my future, the future of others and the future for the world.

There are multiple benefits to becoming an open minded citizen, such as acknowledging the differences of people from their appearances to their perspectives. The differences of people and cultures can be emphasized by noticing various viewpoints on the way of living, language and traditions. These lessons and new information can be used back in day-to-day life at school and being a international school it is most definitely important to understand these contrasts within people.

In my opinion, I think that the people who have the most success with wealth, happiness and/or life are the people who are the most open minded, which comes from seeking discomfort. As stated at the beginning, "Seek Discomfort," is a motto made up by Youtubers, where they try to involve strangers to seek discomfort with them to open their eyes to new views of life and these people who end up seeking discomfort often leads them to bigger and better things, like opening up businesses and having greater success in life.

Grades, social life and the internet are important but resting the brain and to, "Seek Discomfort" is as important.

Happy travels through high school!

*seek  
DISCOMFORT*



## *Visiting Authors Share their Wisdom*

So far this trimester, the Grade 10 SOIS English Language and Literature class has been focused on four different writing styles: Narrative, Descriptive, Persuasive and Expository. Students have been reminded that writing is a process that involves planning, drafting, revising and editing. As students have practiced going through this process, it has become clear that writing can involve a lot of work but that it can also be a deeply rewarding experience, too.

In April, the students were lucky enough to have two talks by visiting authors who discussed both the hard work and the satisfying payoffs of being a writer.

Robert Eldridge has written several non-fiction books in both English and Japanese. His books deal with topics ranging from books on politics and history to treatises on disaster management. Mr Eldridge gave the students a lot of invaluable advice. He didn't sugarcoat it. He was clear that writing can be really challenging. He used the simile of the writing process being like climbing a mountain. It can be daunting, and hard work, but, "The view is great when you are done, and you can be proud of your achievement."



Photo by Dave Algie

Jennifer. A. Nielsen also came and spoke to the Grade 10 students, along with students from the other grades. Ms. Nielsen has had several works of fiction published. She gave a highly inspirational speech about the writing process, especially about what to do when getting that first creative spark for a story. She emphasized that simply having an idea isn't enough. A writer must take up the idea with real passion and intensity and develop it through the writing process.

Both Mr. Eldridge and Ms Nielsen had a lot of wisdom to offer the Grade 10 students. We thank them for their visits and hope to have them back at SOIS to talk to students again in the future.



Photo from Jennifer. A Nielsen Website

## *Congratulations on Your Graduation, SIS Senior Class of 2019!*



***The SIS class of 2019 graduated in March. Tango congratulates them and wishes them well for the future.***



Photos from OISinbrief





## A Visit to Germany by Owen Kralovec

One thing that I enjoy doing from time to time, is to look at digitally colorized images of historical photographs. There are websites where artists display colorized images of Amelia Earhart, Mark Twain and a young Charlie Chaplin. Every time I look at these photos, it strikes me how normal they look. As if I could pass them by on the street. Not someone unreachable or from another time. Jordan Lloyd, one of the few artists who does this kind of work says that when missing the color from a photo, you tend to look at the image as a whole, however when you add the color you start to look at the image in a completely different way. You tend to notice small details that you might have missed before. Also, the amount of corroboration and cross referencing different historical documents sources to find the exact colors needed would make Mrs. Cheney squeal with joy. You may be wondering why am I babbling on about colorized images, and how this is possibly could be a Tango article, well just give me a few more sentences to make this make sense.

Middle and High School students at OIS learn about History through teachers like Mr. McGill, Mr. Nicholl and Mrs.Cheney, and while they do a great job of explaining the events and describing in detail what happened, on my visit to Germany this past winter I realized that no matter how great of a story teller you are, nothing is as good as a story as actually being there. Having the lucky chance to be taught by Mr. McGill and Ms.Cheney in Humanities, we learned a lot about the first two world wars.



The Iconic Brandenburg Gate now, alongside Brandenburg from WWII

We learned about the rise of Hitler and how he came to power. His motorcades by the Brandenburg Gate. The burning of the Reichstag. All these famous events. I could imagine all the people at Hitler's rallies. Us being there, in a place where history was almost palpable was something really special.



Oliver and I act like complete fools while passerby look on in horror as we defile the sanctity of this historical site.

When my father, brother and I took a week trip to Germany I found myself saying to myself, "This is where it actually happened". I would get excited every time we go somewhere where I knew what happened.

Visiting Checkpoint Charlie, the exit in the Berlin Wall, which was the only way to get from East to West, was different. While at times visiting these places felt special, sometimes the opposite effect happened. Being there noticing the smell of the air, the jarring honks of cars and the faint note of sewage made me question if these events really happened here. The novelty of these places is worn down by urbanization and modernization. You can see there is a KFC next to the sign and a McDonalds across the road. These places look so normal it's hard to imagine such important things occurred here.



In Germany, we stayed in an Air B'n'B, that was near David Bowie's apartment in Berlin. He most notably wrote *Heroes* during his tenure here, which is one of his greatest songs. Interestingly enough he also shared the apartment with Iggy Pop. His apartment building is marked by a plaque. Dedicated fans left flowers and candles and it has become somewhat of a shrine. When he died in early 2016, many people left flowers and mementos. Again similar to Checkpoint Charlie, there was only a small signal indicating that something incredible happened here. It was a long walk to find his apartment, so for the payoff to be so small was slightly disappointing. In a better note, I did try my first twinkie on the walk so take that for what you will.



A plaque and small vigil commemorating David Bowie's life outside his apartment in Berlin

We also visited parts of the Berlin Wall in certain parts of the city, which was built originally in an effort to stem the tide of refugees attempting to leave East Berlin, the communist government of East Germany built the Berlin Wall to divide East and West Berlin. The highlight for me was seeing the remnants of the wall near the train station of Nordbahnhof station and Checkpoint Charlie. We read many poignant stories of people successfully escaping the Iron Curtain and also, tragically, stories of many lives lost because of the wall. People were so desperate to get out that they tried all sorts of risky methods of leaving including homemade hot air balloon, make-shift zip lines, and hidden compartments in cars. It was so sad to hear how families were separated from each other in the division of the city. I highly recommend spending time in the Mauermuseum at Checkpoint Charlie.

To take everything into consideration, I feel everyone in their life should go visit historic sites. It helps reminds us of where we have been and where we will go. Understanding our history is the key for us to move forward as a society as well as to not forget those who sacrificed everything for future generations to come. Sightseeing provides multiple perspectives and helps you better understand what actually happened.



Colorized photo of young East Berliner attempting to scale the wall in to West Berlin



## 5 Things you should know about Germany- An Insider's View by Stefano Von Saalfeld

**Berliner Mauer** - The "*berliner mauer*" which is also known as the Berlin Wall is a memorial site in Berlin, German. This is a historical memorial, of when Berlin was separated in two. Across Germany, you can still see the remainder of the wall planted in the ground. This being said it is a representation of both darkness and hopefulness for Germany. The Berlin Wall was a guarded concrete barrier that physically and ideologically divided Berlin from 1961 to 1989. Constructed by the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany), starting on 13 August 1961, the Wall cut off (by land) West Berlin from virtually all of surrounding East Germany and East Berlin until government officials opened it in November 1989. Its demolition officially began on 13 June 1990 and finished in 1992. Although it was there to protect the citizens from interacting, it mostly brought terror and anxiety, as if they treated the people like boxed in mice. But in a way, it brought the citizens to harmonize and come together, as they then took down the walls leaving the memorial in the ground.



**München** - Munich, the city where I lived for nearly 11 years is not the most beautiful city in Germany but also known for its event that is held around the year. For example, the *spring festival*, *weihnachtsfest* (winter fest) and *oktoberfest* etc. Although Berlin is the capital, in my opinion, Munich is the heart of Germany, because it unites the people for good, letting strangers bond over beer and the friendly tune and melody that is heard, emitted by a street musician. Munich unites Germany with beauty, the *schloss* (castles) with their historical value e.g. Nymphenburg, Neuschwanstein schloss, Linderhof, Burghausen, Munich Residenz and many more. Something that is to watch out for would be the beer gardens that have a calm and warm atmosphere in the summer wind, hearing the leaves rustling along with the symphony of the winds.

**Bretzel** - One of the many German delicacies in Munich, Bavaria is the bretzel. When visiting Germany it is a MUST to have, it being one of Germany's main tradition to have this with *Obatzda* which is a traditional recipe made out of cream cheese, paprika, camembert, and butter. Together they emit a fragrance that allures people with its delicacy, making people want more after just one bite. Bretzels are a bread-based food with salt that is spread on the outside of the crust. The Bretzel can be eaten year round for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, this can be then found in the *oktoberfest* in eating contest, food stands but also even plushies populating this traditional source of nutrition.



**Oktoberfest** - Oktoberfest is the world's largest Volksfest (beer festival). Found in Munich, Bavaria, Germany, it is a 16 to 18-day folk festival running from September to the first weekend in October, with more than six million people from around the world attending the event every year. Locally, it is often called the Wiesn, after the colloquial name for the fairgrounds, Theresa's meadows (Theresienwiese). The Oktoberfest is an important part of Bavarian culture, having been held since the year 1810. Other cities across the world also hold Oktoberfest celebrations that are modeled after the original Munich event. This event brings people together as a whole, helping the people come out of their shells, to greet one another, to be free and be carefree. The *Oktoberfest* is an olden tradition that will always be celebrated at the *marienplatz*, munich. Along with this old tradition, we accompany it with specific wear which is called "*lederhosen oder dirndl*", the "*lederhosen*" are leather pants along with a striped shirt, followed by leather shoes and long socks that go up to the man's knee. As for the "*dirndl*" it is a long dress, which is usually the colors of the Bavarian flag, blue, red and white.



**People** - The last thing you need to watch out for is quite a personal subject for me, my reasoning for this is because I grew up surrounded by them. Germans, the friendly, outgoing people, that I grew up with. The ones who taught me the morals and other beliefs that I hold to this day. Although I use to go to an International school, I would always choose to be friends with the German children because they would seem to be of my culture and they know my general thoughts on subjects. Although I had more American friends, I use to often have more conversations in German, to practice my mother language but also to see how they respond. Although Germans can be quite intimidating towards other cultures once in a conversation you will find that you are getting more friendly with them. Of course, Germans might address you with "sir" or "madam" at first as it's part of our language to act formally, but once they get to know you, they will become more friendly.







# MIDDLE SCHOOL SAMBA



~MY GLOBAL ISSUES NETWORK EXPERIENCE~ by Rena Kawasaki

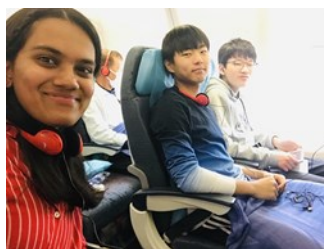


From April 10th ~ April 14th, I had the absolute privilege of going to one of the world's largest student service conferences, Global Issues Network. The conference brings together hundreds of student leaders from around the world to share ideas, learn and collaborate to make the world a better place. Here is a complete summary of our amazing experiences:

## Day 1

We arrived at Manila airport at approximately 13:00, encountered by hot and humid air. Once changed in to comfortable clothing, we took a bus to the hotel.

For dinner, we went to Market! Market! An outdoor market place and had the opportunity to look and feel the Filipino culture firsthand. A small scaled ferris wheel and a merry go round were illuminated by colorful neon lights, with upbeat music blasting in the background. Tents and vendors with different kinds of fruit, some we've never seen before were lined up. The Filipino Family Mart was an interesting place to see the contrast of Japanese and Filipino culture. The store had Filipino and American snacks that we never see in Japan, along with an official Family Mart water bottle. We received our purchased products in a paper bag which was another difference from Japan. Ms.Rumble explained that the Philippines had recently started reducing the amounts of plastic used, hence the usage of the paper bag. After exploring the market, we headed down to Ms.Alcantara's recommendation, Gerry's, for dinner. The restaurant was a barbecue place with a mix of western and Filipino menus. Steaming hot Filipino food was delivered to us, with drinks such as root beer and banana shakes. A group favorite was the Sisig, a plate consisting of fried bread crumbs, onions and meat. For desert we headed to Gelatissimo, a gelato cafe where we tried different combinations of gelato such as Boysenberry swirl or in my case, chocolate and chocolate. Just as the gelato slid down our throats, we headed to the next door cupcake shop called Cupcakes by Sonja where some of us picked up the most delicious and aesthetically pleasing cupcakes you would ever see. The cupcakes were specially packed into adorable little boxes which we took back to the hotel. After an exhausting day of travel, we settled down and went to sleep in the hotel.



## Day 2

After a good night's sleep, we had an excellent multicultural breakfast including cultures of Indian, Filipino and American. After our breakfast, we ventured out into the city of Manila and looked at awe at the enormous apartment buildings and busy streets filled with cars. As we arrived at the Manila American cemetery, a sudden hush fell over the group. Along the concrete pavement were hundreds and thousands of white Christian crosses and stars of Judah, each representing the dead body of an American soldier lying beneath. Further in was a large circular building with walls full of names of people whose bodies weren't discovered. The soldiers who received medals of honor had their names carved in gold, and people whose bodies were uncovered after the carving had metal buttons next to their names representing their discovery. After a tour of the cemetery, we were left to explore for ourselves. I was overwhelmed with a sense of regret and sorrow that I have never felt before. Seeing the damage that my own country, which I loved and cared for, had caused to the innocent lives that were lost. For the first time in my life, I felt ashamed of my own country. I took time to say that I am sorry for each grave that I encountered. The vague sense of evil that I had been fighting and done volunteer activities to work against had, for the first time in my life, become clear to me and I genuinely felt that I 'have' to make a change in this world to make up for the mistakes my country had made. Before we left, we went to the small temple that was located between the circular building to write down our pure feelings and emotions. Some



students left paper cranes, a sign of peace, to represent their feeling for hope for a new peaceful society and generation.

For lunch, we headed to a famous Filipino fast food restaurant called Jollibee. We had heard it was a must go when you visit the Philippines, and were pretty excited to fill our stomachs with it. The French fries were a group favorite. We learned that Jollibee serves banana ketchup, and opinions divided over the taste. After the superb meal, we headed to the mind museum. The mind museum has over 250 interactive exhibits within its walls and covers topics from dinosaurs to fashion. We were tasked to find a topic that we were interested in and present its details to the group at the end of the day. Because of its wide variety of exhibits, it wasn't hard to find a topic that we were interested in. I covered the Gutenberg press which was the first printer that existed. The museum even had a real working printing press and allowed visitors to actually print on a piece of paper. The group joined for two sessions of experiments with an instructor, which covered high/low pressure and fire. After 3 hours of non-stop interactive learning, we headed out to a nearby supermarket to get food and snacks. We discovered that the Philippines had a large amount of Japanese products on its shelves, including Cup Ramen. After many bags of shopping later, we put our shopping bags in the hotel and after some rest, headed out to a place called The Wholesome Table to have dinner. This restaurant was perfect for our trip because it's goal is to be a sustainable restaurant and give the best possible healthy meal to its customers. Their menu has a whole list of why their food is healthy and safe to eat, such as using meat from grass fed cows that are raised without artificial hormones and antibiotics. Over an amazing dinner, we reflected over our learning that day as well as the presentation of topics we chose from the mind museum. We reflected on what we felt from our experience in the Manila American Cemetery, ending with a few of us shedding a tear. After a long day of tourism and learning, we settled down in our hotel rooms and went to sleep.

## Day 3

We woke bright and early, and at 5:00 am, we were packed in a van and was taken to the Masungi Georeserve, one of our highlights of the trip. After 2 hours of driving, we finally arrived at Masungi Georeserve. We immediately recognized the difference from Manila, which we had been staying in. The air was fresh, and temperature was not as hot as in Manila. The gentle whistling of the birds relaxed us as we ate our packed breakfast. After our breakfast our guide, John, gave us an orientation on the georeserve. The georeserve had been open to protect and preserve the nature in Masungi as well as the local tribespeople that had been losing living space due to illegal settlers and businesses. The georeserve employs the native people as guides and to gather information, goals and ideas about the area's future. We also learnt that the georeserve is very limited to public, and visitors are carefully selected. We took the legacy trail of the Masungi Georeserve along with our two guides, one was from a local tribe, and hiked up the mountain. The mountain's nature was thriving, and had nice cool resting spaces with hammocks whenever we had a break. John often stopped and explained important parts and told us stories about the challenging process that they went through in order to get permission to do this kind of service to nature. As we got higher up, the view just got even better, with beautiful skies and nearby mountains. Once we reached the top, we sat inside a bamboo tent and gazed down at the wonderful view of Masungi Georeserve. After some rest, we headed up to the very top of the mountain where there were endless fields of grass land. We took extra care to not step off of the dirt path, because we learnt that grassland was not easy to regrow after it is trampled upon. The whole point of this hike was to contribute to the process of tree neutering and create our legacy in Masungi. We each grabbed





gloves and a tool that worked like a hammer and knife combined and got to work. With the help of a local leader of a tribe, we were each assigned a tree to take care of. For each tree, you first have to cut off the surrounding patches of grass and out them to the side. Next, you use your tool to gently make the ground softer by doing a digging motion. Lastly, you bring the cut grass back and set it on the ground around the tree so it can be reused for fertilizer. After going through a couple of trees (the highest record was 4 trees) it was time for lunch. Two local guides carried up our lunches for that day, which was waiting to us in a tent on the top of the mountain. Our food was wrapped traditionally with a leaf from a banana tree. When opened, delicious smelling steam rose to our face. Rice covered with barbecued pork along with pickled eggplant and tomato. Outside the leaf package was a purple colored egg. We ate our food in less than 10 minutes. I believe that it was the best thing I've eaten in my life mixed with the sense of achievement of climbing up a mountain. After lunch, we walked 1 minute to a large net suspended from multiple trees. Over the net were four houses, also suspended. We took our shoes off and climbed on, and after some exploration, we settled down with a cushion and took a good nap.

After one hour, we woke and started to climb down the mountain double the speed we climbed up. After we came down, we were all exhausted and dehydrated. The guide gave us frozen towels that saved our lives! After some rest, we piled into the van and headed back to the hotel. During the drive, it was interesting to see how the landscape made transitions from rural to urban. We spent our time singing our hearts out to Disney theme songs and had a great time. As we slowly pulled into the parking lot, we rushed out to change into formal wear as we headed to the opening ceremony of the GIN conferences. After walking through multiple streets, we saw a large building called the International School of Manila. The building was enormous with a massive field and playground outside. The inside was even more breathtaking with shops and a food court that looked like a mall. We piled in to the auditorium and saw that the stage was decorated with mangrove trees and looked very traditional.

After the opening ceremony, a daughter and father walked up to the stage to give us a workshop. The father, Steve Sostak has founded "Inspire Citizens", a organization that educates people about the Sustainable Development Goals. The daughter, Lucy was a great public speaker at the age of



eleven and their workshop was very interesting. I especially liked when they introduced the 169 targets of the 17 goals and we were able to find exactly what we wanted to do in the future. After some amazing dinner, we went back to the hotel and got a good night's sleep.

**Day 4**

We woke up and got some delicious breakfast, then headed to a full day of professional workshops. We selected our options for workshops in advance, and we were pretty excited to learn what we wanted to learn from experts. Before our workshops, we had a wonderful keynote speaker called Alexandra Eduque. She is the women who founded MovEd, an organisation that advocates in bringing holistic early childhood care and development programs to underserved communities around the Philippines. Ms.Eduque actually started her service career at high school. From her speech, we learned that change can come from anytime. First we took the Design thinking workshop where we created a design that will benefit our partner. The second workshop we took was the Community Mapping workshop. Here, we analyzed a simulated community and thought about the services that we can provide for the community with materials inside the community. For example, my group was allocated a community where trash was a problem. We advised that the people collecting the trash should actually go to schools to educate the students to put the trash in the bins. Our next workshop was called Fight to Protect. The instructor was a world champion of taekwondo, and she had founded a organization called Fight to Protect a which saves children from the

vulnerable spot of human trafficking, especially for sexual abuse. The organization helps these children spread public awareness about this issue by the power of sports such as taekwondo and we had fun actually learning the sport and self-defense. The last workshop we went to was the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The instructor the co- founder of Messy Bessy, a brand where they employ young people who had their downs in life such as sexual abuse and being arrested, and help them resume their education, while gaining the correct rehabilitation. The instructor explained that an entrepreneur was a business and we were going to learn about social entrepreneurship, which is a business that gives back to the community in some way. In the end of the session, we were tasked with actually planning a business that gives back to the public. Our group came up with the Yummy Tummy, a business were we rent out land and property to NGOs who need it. We manage and run their events and help them spread awareness. Our business is based off of the second SDG, no hunger. We mainly handle and manage NGOs that support this cause. Although opinions divided on what our favorite workshop was, I really liked the Community Mapping workshop because that is exactly what I wanted to do in the future, to create service projects and analyze the community to advance living quality and education. After some chatting with Mr.Nicholl, I realized that I could actually use community mapping to help the homeless in Osaka and see what services I can do for them. After the workshop, we had another interesting keynote speech by Dr.Heidi Sampang. Dr.Sampang introduced us to the world's medical state today. She is the country program manager of Remote Area Medical Phillipines (RAM-Ph). The organization provides free medical aid to places in the Philippines where id is desperately needed. From her speech we realized that change can come from all sorts of angles and professions, the only thing that counts is his or her motivation and passion for the project. After the workshops, we gathered for a over dinner social. I got to meet some cool people from ISM (International School of Manila) and from an International School in Tokyo and many other schools. We ate dinner with them and exchanged contacts to keep in touch. After the dinner we headed back to the hotel and got our last sleep in Manila.

**Day 5**

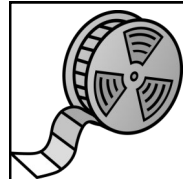
We woke and got formally dressed and prepared for our presentation. This day was for student led workshops, where each of the student groups present about their actions and services in their own communities. After attending a very interesting workshop about bringing children books in their community, it was our turn. Before attending workshops, we had wonderful keynote speakers, Isabel and Mia Sieh. The twins are from ISM, and at highschool, they have already funded organisations independently. We learned from their speech that change can be made by even the youngest people.

Ayana, Tanishka and I presented about the connections of poverty and lack of education. Nayuki and Mia presented about gender equality in education. Eun, Shimon, Kent and Sanghyun presented persistent chemicals in the oceans. After a successful presentation, ending with a promise of collaboration with a different school, we headed out and went on the bus to the airport.

Overall, the GIN conference helped me realize again that the collaboration of different student leaders are crucial to the collaboration of the earth in the new generation, and it doesn't matter what country, what continent you are from, you are still citizens of the Earth. The GIN conference was a very special experience and I will definitely go back next year to contribute.







# Movie News

with Sarah Kitamura

The new Avengers movie, *Endgame*, is coming out next week Friday (at the time of writing) here in Japan. I'm terrified.

Now, I know what you're thinking: these Marvel movies are just about fighting and characters with superpowers. But these movies are really important to a lot of people, including me. I'm eighteen and graduating soon but these movies and characters mean a whole lot to me. I'll explain why.

I grew up watching these Marvel movies, alongside so many other people who are in their late teens right now. Iron Man 1 came out in September of 2008. That would make me seven years old at that time.

I'm eighteen now.

Looking back, the time difference between when the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) first started, and now, when an era is coming to an end, is astounding. Last summer I went on spree where I rewatched all of the MCU movies in order, and let me tell you, it was one hell of a ride.

Now that I'm older and know more things, it made me have a greater appreciation for these films, for instance, when I rewatched *Captain America: Civil War*. Back then it was easy for me to choose between Team Cap or Team Iron Man. I chose Iron Man because I thought he was cooler. However, it took me a while, but it dawned on me that I'm not actually on anyone's team. I've come to realize the complexities of these characters which had been built up over the years, and that basically all—with the exception of Spider-Man—characters are at fault for what happened in the movie.

Basically, now I've learned to appreciate and love each character because of how they're characterized, not just because they're cool. But also because they *are* cool.

Now that this era is coming to an end, I really, *really* don't want to watch *Endgame*. At the same time I really want to.

I'm conflicted. Everything's a mess. I'm a mess. So are other people.



I'm excited to see what the newer characters have to offer in future films (and in the limited series for Wanda, Vision, Sam, Bucky, and...Loki?), but it's going to be really hard to say farewell to the characters I'm so familiar with. Not to mention, the actors who play these characters won't be in press tours together anymore.

I'd also like to add that this has not only been life-changing for much of the audience, but also for the stars themselves. Before *Infinity War* premiered for the first time, RDJ made a heartfelt speech about the MCU and everyone who's been a part of it.

He comments about his past experiences with drug addiction and the problems he had with law enforcement earlier on in his career, then about "the recovery and escape from that life that the role of Iron Man afforded him" (Breznican, Anthony). Here's an extract of his speech, courtesy of Anthony Breznican:

The present is this moment of glory for *all* of us. And the future...? That is always uncertain. But looking at these friends behind me...it seems like things might brighten up after all.

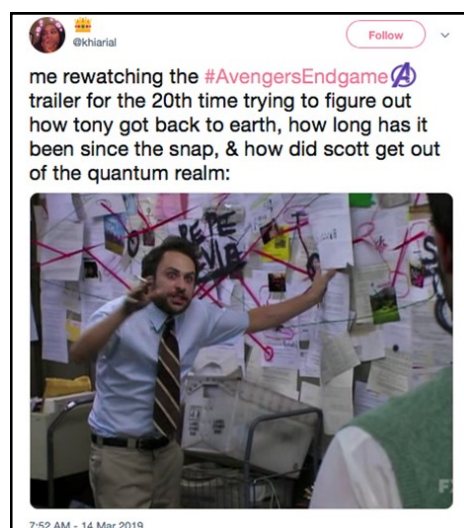
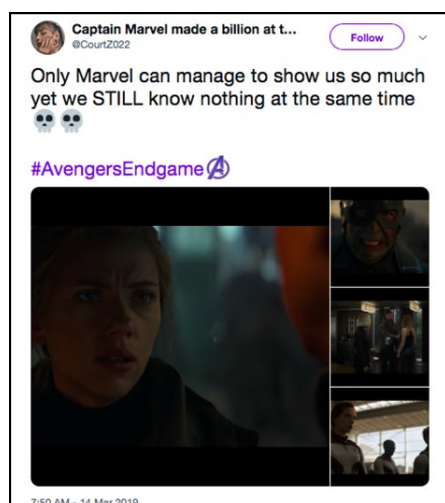
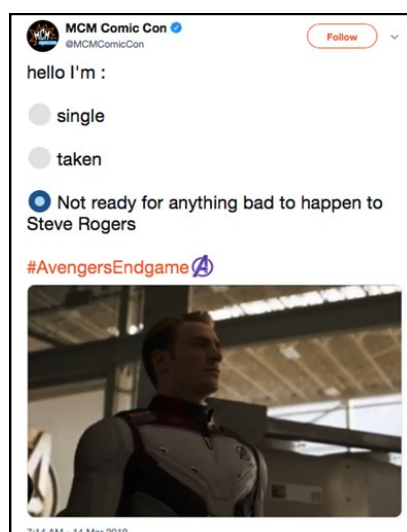
In addition, it seems like being a major part of Marvel changed Chris Hemsworth's life, too, for the better. In an interview conducted by *Men's Health* magazine, he states that he was about to quit his acting career.

"And then my mentality changed, which came from being at a point where I was like, 'I'm going to go back to Australia.' I had one more audition where I was like, 'Do this for his house. Think about reasons other than yourself.'"<sup>1</sup>

From there he was able to snag the roles in two movies before *Thor*. His career continued to grow after Avengers, where he returned for the sequel *Thor: The Dark World* and the next Avengers movie, *Age of Ultron*. But his acting range wasn't only limited to action movies, anymore. He starred in a comedy movie called *Vacation*, before appearing as a notable minor character in the more recent *Ghostbusters* movie.

Overall, Marvel's changed lives for so many people, and it's just going to be hard to come to terms with the fact that these actors are not going to be playing our favorite characters anymore. This is the last movie with all of the original Avengers together. This is the last movie featuring one of Stan Lee's famous cameos. This is truly the end of an era, and while it's sad, I'm really glad that I got to be part of this journey with the other millions of people around the world.

<sup>1</sup> Jhoty, Ben. "Chris Hemsworth on Building a Stronger, Faster, Better Future." *Men's Health*, Hearst Magazine Media, 30 Jan. 2019, [www.menshealth.com/health/a25934824/chris-hemsworth-thor-workout-app-interview/](http://www.menshealth.com/health/a25934824/chris-hemsworth-thor-workout-app-interview/).







## Book Reviews

*In belated celebration of International Women's Day, Mr. Algie shares some of his favorite female writers.*

**Rosemary Sutcliff** was a historical novelist who wrote mostly for young people. I read many of her novels when I was a teenager and this had a huge influence on me. Her stories drew me into fiction and they drew me into history. Reading fiction and learning about history have given me so much enjoyment throughout my life and I feel like I owe Rosemary Sutcliff a lot!

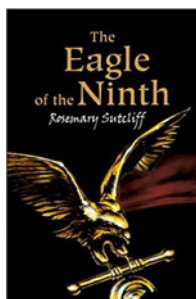
Her writing is so good at bringing different times and places to life for the reader. Reading her books made me feel transported back to ancient Greece or to Roman Britain or to the time of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688.

Last summer, after a gap of about 30 years, I started reading some of her books again. It was an incredibly nostalgic experience, taking me back to my early teenage years and bringing ancient times to life for me once more.

To be honest, the books will not be for everyone's taste, these days. They feel somewhat dated. They aren't as fast paced as *The Hunger Games* novels by **Suzanne Collins**, or the *Harry Potter* series by **JK Rowling**. But they are evocative and often poetic.

Sutcliff's novels have an underlying sadness in them, even when the ending to a novel is an ostensibly happy one. Sutcliff dealt with sadness and heartache in her own life, having been confined to a wheelchair after a childhood illness,

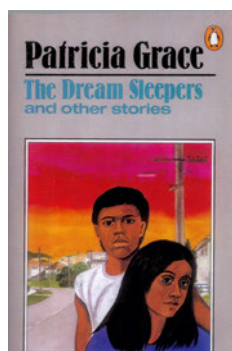
Her stories are so evocative that I would recommend them to anyone who likes poetic, thoughtful narratives about believable characters set in long ago times.



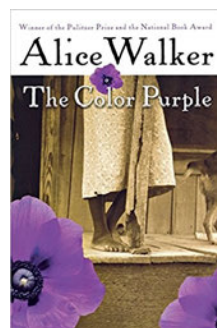
For young readers a good place to start might be her *Eagle of the Ninth* trilogy set in Roman Britain. It starts with *The Eagle of the Ninth*, followed by *The Silver Branch* and *The Lantern Bearers*. For more mature readers, *The Flowers of Adonis* set during the Peloponnesian War, or *Sword at Sunset* set in Dark Age Britain are both gripping- if somewhat somber- novels well worth reading.

New Zealand has produced some fine women writers: **Janet Frame**, **Keri Hulme** and the incomparable **Katherine Mansfield**. But one of my favorite writers from my home country is **Patricia Grace**. Patricia Grace is Maori, tracing her ancestry to Ngati Toa, Ngati Raukawa and Te Ati Awa tribes. She has written novels, but what I really like are her short stories. She has several short story collections, and each short story is, in my opinion, a gem. My favorites are *Beans* and *It Used to be Green Once* from her 1980 collection *Dream Sleepers*. I also really like *Flies* from her 1987 collection *Electric City and Other Stories*.

What's so great about Patricia Grace's short stories? She uses point of view brilliantly. Her stories are usually in the first person, from a child's perspective and as you read, you get a strong sense of what it's like to be a kid: the childlike innocence, the occasional innate cruelty, a sense of wonder at the world.

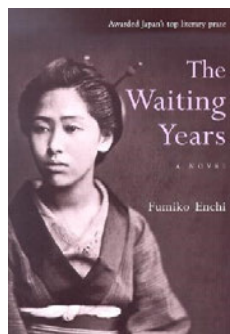


Many of Grace's narrators are rural Maori children. You get a sense that the stories are largely autobiographical. This can be a strength or weakness depending on how accessible and relatable the reader might find the setting and the idioms used. I was raised in rural New Zealand and her stories resonate perfectly for me.



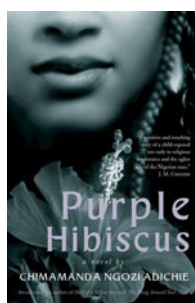
One of my all time favorite books is *The Color Purple* by African American writer **Alice Walker**. It follows the story of Celie, a young woman who overcomes incredible hardship and pain to establish an identity for herself and assert her own value and worth. I love this novel and am always recommending it to people. The book was made into a film by Stephen Spielberg in 1985, and features great performances by **Whoopi Goldberg**, **Oprah Winfrey** and **Margaret Avery**. As wonderful as the film is, the novel is even better.

It is a novel for mature readers, and features strong language, references to sexuality and scenes of violence. In spite of all the tough issues it deals with, it has sense of growing hope and optimism, and a celebration of how resilient the human spirit can be.



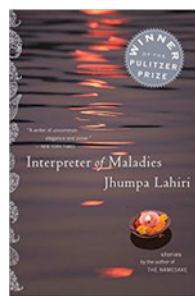
For a novel featuring a female protagonist, by a female Japanese writer, check out *The Waiting Years* (In Japanese, 女坂- literally, "Sloping Woman") by **Fumiko Enchi** (円地 文子). This novel depicts the main character, Tomo, in a struggle to find peace and satisfaction in Japan in the first half of the 20th century. The book portrays Japanese society and values at this time as being incredibly oppressive and demeaning for women like Tomo. Reading this book really opened my eyes as to how soul-destroying a patriarchal society can be for a woman. It also shows how strong women can be in simply surviving with their sense of purpose and identity intact.

If you are a reader that likes their novels action-packed, this book probably isn't for you. There is not a lot of outward drama in the story. Still, I found it thought provoking and a couple of the scenes are so vivid they live in your memory long after you finish reading.



To return to the color purple motif, another fine book I have read recently is *Purple Hibiscus* by Nigerian writer **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**. I had to familiarize myself with this novel in order to grade an assessment for a student who had studied it at a previous school. I am glad this text was brought to my attention in this way, because I found myself immersed in it from start to finish. It is about a Nigerian family headed by a charismatic but despotic father figure. The ways in which the children, Jaja and Kambili,

and their mother Beatrice, respond to the father's overpowering presence take some twists and turns, to say the least. But the story is so believable that I was rather surprised it to find it wasn't strictly autobiographical. I will be re-reading this novel again before too long, and also looking to read more from this talented author.



We study the short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* by **Jhumpa Lahiri** with the Grade 10 English Language and Literature class. It's one of my favorite units in the course because Lahiri is so gifted at characterization. Her characters feel so real and human. None of them are caricatures or cardboard cutouts.

Another thing that resonates for me is that Lahiri's stories feel so international. Lahiri was born in the UK to Indian parents, and her characters are often culturally Indian but adapting to life in the US or UK. As an immigrant myself, and a member of a bicultural family and multicultural community, I feel like Lahiri's stories are at the same time familiar and yet new and intriguing.

Mr Algie also recommends:

- *A Good Man is Hard to Find* and *Everything that Rises must Converge* by **Flannery O'Connor**.
- *The Diviners* by **Margaret Laurence**
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by **Zora Neale Hurston**
- *Wide Sargasso Sea* by **Jean Rhys**
- *Like Water for Chocolate* by **Laura Esquivel**



SIS Short Story Class: 55 Word Stories

55-word “flash fiction”

Students in the SIS short stories class tried their hand at writing “flash fiction”: super short stories, in this case stories with only and exactly 55 words. Character, conflict, resolution: easier said than done.

LAST WORDS

by Rie Uehara

I woke up in a sweat.  
“Goodbye,” James had said in my dream. Is my husband going to die? Panicked, I ran outside.  
“Be careful driving to work, dear. I dreamed you might die!”  
“Don’t be silly!”  
“I’m dead serious,” I shouted, walking out into the road to wave goodbye, not seeing the speeding truck.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY?

by Caitlyn Gazzard

Stepping out of the red Lamborghini was my handsome fiancé. He had proposed to me two days ago.  
“Happy birthday, beautiful,” he said, offering me his hand and a bouquet of roses. A beeping noise grew louder as I rolled over, realising that it was my alarm and I was spending my birthday alone again.

THE BULLY

by Reina Hara

I decide to stand up for myself.  
Hands shaking and palms sweating, I walk toward her and face her nose to nose. I look her in the eye and say, “Stop being mean to me.”  
“I’ve been waiting to hear those words all along,” says the bully, and I see a smile in the mirror.

RUNNING FOR HER LIFE

by A. Coach

The girl ran, panting, panicked, nowhere to hide, the sun like a spotlight.  
“I’ll never make it,” she thought. “This’ll be the death of me.”  
“Faster,” the PE teacher yelled. “One minute left. Don’t you want a strong heart and lungs to live longer?”  
“Yes,” she sputtered with her final breath, falling to the ground.

The Worn Broom

by Ximing Pan

Someone had accidentally sliced the older sister’s right hand with a knife while the women were cooking for their relative’s wedding party. The blade tore through skin, fat, muscle, ligaments and tendons, leaving her hand swollen and bruised even after it was sewn back together. But a blackness had taken over not just her right, but also her left hand. Left with nothing but the hope that her daughter would rear her grandchildren, she pressed on massaging her fingers. She had not slept well since the incident, and it showed in her yellowed face and sunken eyes. The man next to her had been quiet the whole dinner. Not a breath had escaped his discolored lips. It was with those lips possessed by Mot that he offered a smile.

Beside him sat a man whose head gleamed under the cheap diner lights. All he could do was watch others consume offerings the he was not allowed to eat. What a pity. To his left, sat the slouching dancer who did not want to eat. You cannot help but laugh at this duo.

The loudest of the bunch was the dancer’s drunk husband who had just downed another cup of alcohol. No one bothered to pull him back in from the mist. They had let him walk himself into it—out of respect for the eldest, of course. His little sister, who sat next to him, just rambled on and on about the gods. But not the ones that had possessed the table. No, she spoke of the divine ancestors that supposedly watched over us while the Ankou she desperately tried to ignore grew in her stomach.

The drunk’s daughter had already given her teeth just one year ago. But her sacrifice must have uncovered something less than ideal, for she locked herself into the hospital after that. She came out a moth emerging from her cocoon. All we could do was watch as she frailly pawed at the cage she had spun herself.

The ice cold mother looked up from her meal to point to a broom. There was a mess that would not clean itself. The dad trembled with pity as he watched his princess pick up the worn broom.

Scratch scratch scratch.

PYP Exhibition This Week!

Check out the Grade 5 PYP exhibition on the second floor! The Grade 5 students have put a lot of work into the exhibition and are hoping to share what they have learned through the whole process.

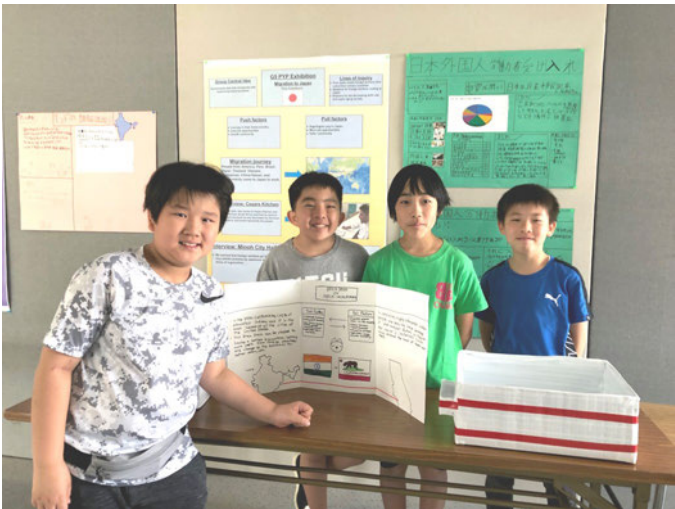


Photo by Dave Algie



Photo by Jennifer Henbest



# Op-ed: Does SOIS have a Liberal Agenda?

by Kurt Mecklem

International Women’s Day, Earth Week, Rainbow Week, it seems that like at most IB Schools, different groups in SOIS are always seeking to raise awareness about something. This may have you asking, should a school be focusing on these types of issues? With Rainbow Week coming up, the committee conducted a survey in short homeroom a few weeks ago. One of the purposes of the survey was to gather questions for LGBTQ+ people to respond to in a panel discussion. A few students raised questions that brought up important issues but have more to do with the school’s decision to host such an event and are not something the panel can respond to. They are good questions that should not be ignored so it seemed that they would be better addressed by me here.

One question was whether holding events like these is promoting a “liberal agenda”. The implication being that we are trying to push a certain world view upon the students. Another question had to do with whether holding such events were actually counter productive. By singling out marginalized groups are we not just pointing out they are different and perpetuating that belief?

Is raising awareness about LGBTQ+ people promoting a “liberal agenda”? This label is an ill defined term that shows up in memes and is used by conservative pundits, especially in the US to imply that there is some kind of conspiracy on the left to win the hearts and minds of young people. The problem with labels like these or similar tropes about conservatives being mean or heartless is that they are used to stoke fears about the “other side” in political debates. They imply an us vs. them dichotomy that does not exist in real life except perhaps at the political extremes. Arguments and talking about others is easier if we can neatly place people into categories. But real life is often messier than that. A gay man in Tokyo may firmly believe that homosexuals should have equal rights but also want to change the constitution to allow the self defense forces to play a more overt role in foreign affairs. So is he pushing a liberal agenda or a conservative one? Is there even an “agenda” or is he just a person that has strong feelings on some different issues? Many people will find themselves in similar circumstances, they may generally lean towards more conservative or liberal views but have certain ideas or beliefs that do not fit the label. It is probably true that the majority of LGBTQ+ supporters lean liberal but there are many others who identify as conservative who see it as simply a human rights issue that goes beyond a left-right divide.

The purpose of an event like Rainbow Week is not to push an agenda but to raise awareness about one particular group of people. You may think that LGBTQ+ people

should not have equal rights and you certainly would not be alone. There is no rule on campus that you cannot argue your point of view. But you should know that your support of laws that limit rights are not just a theoretical discussion but have an impact on members of our community including parents, teachers and students. The point of raising awareness is to understand that whatever side of an issue you fall on, your beliefs can have an impact on real people.

And it is this point that is related to the second question. By raising awareness of LGBTQ+ people or other groups that may be discriminated against are not we further marginalizing them by holding them up as a distinct group? The fact is, though, they are already marginalized by society. There are laws that discriminate against members of the LGBTQ+ community. Only Tokyo and Ibaraki prefectures have rules protecting LGBTQ+ people from discrimination in the workplace. This means that everywhere else in Japan homosexuals can be fired simply because they are gay. A transgender person in Japan is allowed to change their sex as long as they agree to get sterilized. The US Supreme Court recently agreed to hear a case on whether sexual minorities are protected against discrimination at work. Considering the current court’s makeup it is possible they will say no. According to a study described by Reuters in 2018 around 50% of transgender teens who were born female but identify as male have attempted suicide. The authors believe this is likely a result of the teens being marginalized and discriminated against.

So yes, by holding an event like Rainbow Week we are pointing out that some people are different. Ideally, we should just be able to accept people for who they are and not single out sexual minorities or other groups in special events. The fact is there are laws and prejudice against LGBTQ+ people and there are discussions happening about whether those laws should continue or even be strengthened. We are not at a point where we can just pretend that the issue does not exist.

So, should a school be raising these types of issues with students? Yes. Schools, including ours have grappled with these questions when deciding such things as which toilet transgender students should use. We want you to be aware that LGBTQ+ people exist in our community, the local community, and the global community. Raising awareness is not pushing an agenda or marginalizing people more than they already are. It is ensuring that when an issue comes up, whether it is about a proposed law in the Diet or the bathrooms on campus, people are informed about the issue and are aware of the real human beings who are involved.

## Rainbow Week (May 13 - 17, 2019)

Come help us celebrate diversity on our campus, with our second annual SOIS Rainbow Week!

Inspired by Kwansei Gakuin’s Rainbow Week, the SOIS Rainbow Week Planning Committee has organized a range of activities to increase awareness and understanding of LGBT topics.

**Grades KA-G5:**

PYP Exhibition students Elina, Ellen and Nene will be leading sessions with the KA-Grade 5 classes focusing on awareness about diversity.

**Grades 6-12:**

Promotion on the School News	Short Homeroom Activities
Kahoot! Quiz during Flex time	Genkan TV - movies & statistics
Student Attitude Surveys	Rainbow Week book display in the library
LGBT Discussion Panel during Long Homeroom	



# Talking TOK

with Dave Algie



## Black holes, knowledge questions and the role female scientists have played in expanding scientific knowledge

I was scrolling through my Twitter feed the other day when I came across an awesome video of an interview with **Dr Katie Bouman**. Dr. Bouman is a key member of the team that captured the first visual image of a black hole. This breakthrough was announced and the photo was published on April 10th.<sup>1</sup>



In the video interview I watched, Dr Bouman demonstrated a passionate enthusiasm for both acquiring and sharing scientific knowledge. She said she had seen the images a while ago but that it was “spectacular” to be able to share this scientific knowledge with the public.<sup>2</sup> This reminded me of discussions we have in TOK class about whether “emotion” has a part to play in gaining knowledge in the sciences. A quick viewing of the interview shows that the answer to this knowledge question is an emphatic “yes”. Dr Bouman was clearly inspired by the breakthroughs she and the other members of the team had just made to pursue even more knowledge. “This

is going to be the beginning...A whole new window into what black holes can tell us about the laws of physics..” Passion, curiosity and the desire to share new information are clearly vital in the gaining of knowledge in the sciences.

What is a black hole anyway? Black holes are formed when certain stars collapse after going supernova (A supernova is a massive explosion).<sup>3</sup> They have gravitational forces so strong that no light can escape.<sup>4</sup> Black holes are all so far away that it has been impossible until now to get a picture of one. Scientists have been fascinated with them for over a century, and the science around black holes raises some interesting knowledge questions. Let's identify a few.

So black holes are far away and, uh, black. How did we ever know they existed in the first place? Black holes were largely predicted through theory. In the 1700s, a little-known Cambridge scientist **John Michell** made predictions about what would happen if a star's gravity was so powerful even light could not escape it.<sup>5</sup> Michell called this hypothetical star a “Dark Star”.



Because “Death Star” was already taken.

Although many of Michell's speculations were wrong, his theories were in some regards very clever and prescient.

Theories about black holes and how they might work became more prominent in the first half of the 20th century through work by **Albert Einstein** who developed general gravitational equations, and the German astronomer **Karl Schwarzschild** who solved these equations and showed that once a body had enough mass, light could not escape it.<sup>6</sup>

Einstein and Schwarzschild's “knowledge” about black holes was based on theories and equations. For sure, Michell and Einstein had come up with their theories about black holes based on things they had observed, and reasoning deriving from those observations. But the knowledge we had until April wasn't based on anything we had directly observed. Nobody had seen a black hole until the black hole project produced the image that was released to the public on April 10.

Watching the interview with Dr Bouman, I was struck by how she emphasized the importance of testing hypotheses with observation. “Even though we predicted that if you had a black hole you would see this ring of light (around the black hole), we didn't know we were going to get that ring of light. And that's what we were testing. We could have just got a blob”

From these comments, we can see that in science there is a sometimes complex connection between prediction and observation. As TOK students learn in class, science is about the testing of hypotheses through observation and experiment. Yet hypotheses themselves stem from observations. More knowledge questions can arise about the interplay between observation, experiment, reason and hypotheses. The exciting news about the black hole project reminded us me of **one of OIS's own scientists in Grade 12** and her recent TOK essay on the relationship between theoretical and experimental approaches in sciences. The news of the black hole image came out too late for her to use in her essay, but her discussion of theory and observation was very thoughtful and worthwhile. I learned a lot from it and have drawn on some of what I learned from her here.

Using a variety of test and measurements is also a key element in science. Dr Bouman said that the measurements of the light around the black hole in the photo backed up previous measurements that had been done “completely differently”. This reminded me how scientists test measurements against each other to check their findings. How many times does something need to be measured and in how many ways before statements about it can be made with certainty? How do scientists know what kinds of measurements are needed? These are further knowledge questions that arise out of this real life situation.

I am sorry to say that Dr Bouman's contribution to the black hole project drew some negative attention. Some critics felt that she was being given too much credit by the media simply because she is a female scientist. Dr Bouman always pointed out that she is one member of a 200 strong team. She has never claimed to be the lead scientist. The fact is, Dr. Bouman *does* deserve a huge amount of credit for this brilliant scientific breakthrough, as do all the 200 scientists in the team, 40 of whom are women.<sup>7</sup> Each scientist played a part, as did many scientists who went before, paving the way for them with earlier breakthroughs. This reminds me of another great question about the pursuit of knowledge in science. To what extent is it ever an individual effort? Or is science always a collective enterprise?

Dr. Bouman is one accomplished woman in a distinguished tradition of women scientists, women mathematicians and woman engineers dating all the way back to the dawn of history. Women have always had the capacity to inquire, calculate, formulate and test hypotheses and make outstanding breakthroughs in science. They just haven't always had the opportunities, credit or support they need and deserve.

**Hypatia** was a Greek mathematician and astronomer working in Egypt in the 4th Century CE. She contributed to the invention of the astrolabe, which was used in calculating the position of the moon, stars and sun at any time. **Wang Zhenyi** was another astronomer working in China in the mid 1700s. She did important work on predicting lunar eclipses. **Ada Lovelace** was a mathematician in the UK in the 1800s who invented one of the first computer programs. Reading about these scientists lives in *Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls* by **Elena Favilli** and **Francesca Cavallo**,<sup>8</sup> I can't help but see their passionate curiosity reflected and continued in the work of Dr Katie Bouman. Other great women scientists worth reading about include the Danish geologist **Inge Lehmann**, the Polish scientist **Marie Curie** who pioneered the study of radiation, and the African American chemist **Alice Ball** whose development of a treatment for leprosy has saved thousands of lives.<sup>9</sup>



I am proud to say that **my daughter** is already an inquirer, at age six. She asks questions like, "If the world is spinning, why don't we feel dizzy?" and, "Why can we see our arm muscle when we bend our arm up but not when our arm is out flat?" and, "Why don't birds fall out of the sky when the wind changes?". I think you will agree, these are all excellent questions.

In fact even when my daughter was 3, she was forming hypotheses. I once asked her why she thought dinosaurs had become extinct. She had three possibilities in mind. Her first idea was that all the dinosaurs might have died because, "They got stung by bees". She thought for a bit more, and then offered another possible reason for the dinosaurs' extinction, "People hit them with sticks". I didn't really understand her third hypothesis: "The dinosaurs all died because they ate rocks. And on each rock, maybe there was a poisonous frog".

Now, it is possible that none of my daughter's theories about why the dinosaurs went extinct is accurate. And maybe her questions are at this stage are bit childish. But she is showing the characteristics of a scientist: The curiosity, the ability to form good questions, the creativity to come up with hypotheses. I need to start asking her "How would you test that idea?". Because once she can test her hypotheses, she'll be doing real science. And real science is fun.

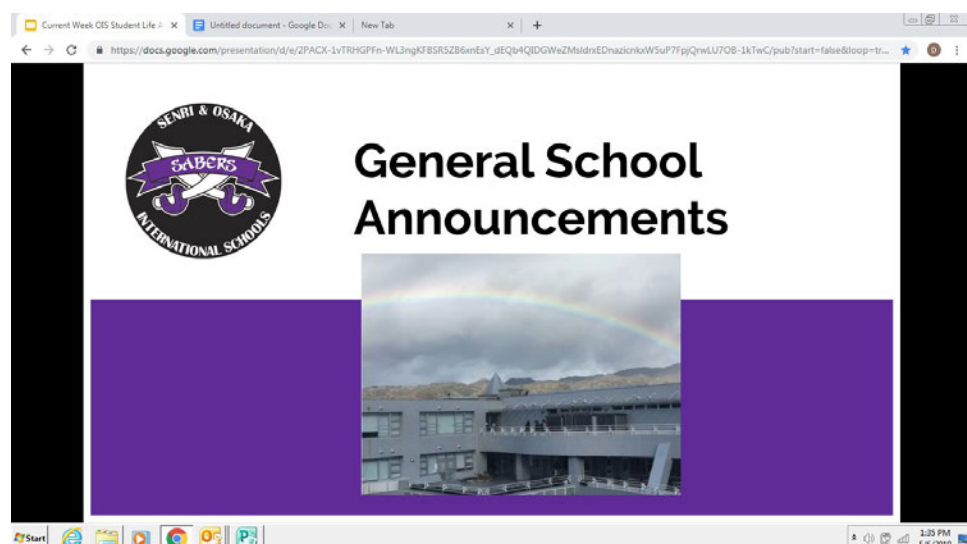
If you are a student who believes this, that real science *is* fun, then I urge you to get into science in a big way. At school. At university. As a career. Check out the video of Dr Katie Bouman talking about the black hole photo, and see how much fun she is having, how much meaning and purpose the pursuit of new knowledge is giving her. It doesn't matter if you are a boy or girl, or however you identify yourself. It doesn't matter whether you think you're super-talented in science or not. If you want to succeed in science, curiosity, passion and hard work will take you a long, long way. If you are at all interested in future study or a career in science, go and talk to **Ms. Rumble**, or **Ms. Nicholl**, **Kono sensei**, **Ogihara sensei**, or **any of the SOIS science teachers** about it!

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## Check out Student Life Announcements!

"SOIS Student Life Announcements" is a one-stop shop for students who want to keep up with what is going on at SOIS. Notices, news, links and more! It's all updated on a daily basis, so check it out! The address is [bit.ly/SOIS\\_SLA](http://bit.ly/SOIS_SLA), so make sure you add it to your favorites on your phones and devices, and keep up with everything going on at SOIS.



## Tango Team

President: Ximing Pan  
 Editor: Dave Algie  
 Layout Advisor: Paul Sommer

### The Tango team:

Minami Matsushima	Tasuku Azuma
Nanami Hasegawa	Takayoshi Tokai
Khang Duc Le	Oka Maeda
Antonio Kogata	Tyus Sheriff
Skye Inada	Noah Izumi
Yu Takahashi	Owen Kralovec
Emily Yoo	Mina Allen
Kokoro Ishiuchi-Ray	Sarah Kitamura
Stefano Von Saalfeld	Yoshi Kamegai
Joshua Clifton	Erika Hatsuda
Janet Jones	

"Middle School Samba" Lead Journalist: Rena Kawasaki

### Special contributions were made to this edition by:

Kurt Mecklem	Tara Cheney	Eojin Lee
Mao Sakamoto	Erin Jung	Do Hee Kwon
Ryo Fujii	Peter Heimer	Jennifer Henbest

### Special thanks to:

Allana Rumble	Trevor Jones	Frances Namba
Fumi Saito	Tara Cheney	Michelle Nicholl
Steve Lewis	Derek Entwistle	



# Editorial

by Ximing Pan

“People only do things for other people for their own gains,” Tye said confidently.

“What about volunteers?”

“Nah they’re just doing it for the positive attention.”

I cut the conversation short as I pointed across the street. There was a middle aged man with a cigarette in his hand chatting up two schoolgirls on the other side of the road. The girls were clearly uncomfortable. “Lets cross.” I said.

As we walked across the street, Tye yelled in Japanese, “Don’t smoke.” It was a diversion to pull the man’s attention onto us.

The man looked up and lifted his cigarette. He squeezed his cigarette between his thumb and index finger and took a step towards us.

“I put it out,” the man said as he showed us the soot on his fingers. Did he think it would actually intimidate us? Ew. But at least he didn’t litter.

There was an awkward silence, but the man’s attention had fully transferred to us.

I nudged Tye and pointed at the pedestrian light, hoping that the girls would take this opportunity. “Look, it is green.”

The man watched them as they biked off and turned back to us. “You know, I’m from Osaka University.”

A pause.

“Really?”

The man took another step towards us. He was close enough that I could smell the smoke.

My head was racing as I scoured for a viable escape plan. My thoughts were rudely interrupted by Tye. “She’s pregnant!” He shouted with his phone against his ear. “We have to go now!”

“No way, congratulations.” We kept up our diversion as we ran away from the man. I like to think that he had a bewildered look on his face at Tye’s random, spontaneous exit plan.

When we slowed down, I asked “hey so when you were intervening to help those girls, did you think you were going to get something out of it?”

“Huh,” he said thoughtfully. “Not really. No.”

“So, you’re saying that you did something for someone else without thinking that you would gain something?”

“Yeah. Oh, I see what you did there. Well-“

“Thank you so much!” Two voices behind us shouted in unison. It was the two girls from earlier. Without waiting for our response, they made a u-turn and peddled away.

I craned my head to catch a glimpse of my friend’s expression. He was deep in thought. He opened his mouth, and I thought he was going to come to some realization. “There’s a FamilyMart there. Should we stop for food?”

It was only later that he disclosed his revelation. “Being a feminist is just being a decent human being.”

# Amnesty International

by Kokoro Ishiuchi-Ray

“Only when the last prisoner of conscience has been freed, when the last torture chamber has been closed, when the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a reality for the world’s people, will our work be done.” - Peter Benenson, Amnesty International founder. Amnesty International is a global movement of over 7 million people who work together to bring corrupt people to justice and free those who have been wrongfully imprisoned. People who contribute are fighting for human rights to be available to everyone, to abolish abuse and oppressive laws. They speak out for those who don’t have a voice in hopes of granting freedom and dignity to those who are under threat.

Last year, all OIS Grade 6 and 7s wrote letters to people wrongfully imprisoned. Some of those they wrote to were even freed. Last December, Mr. Nicholl opened his classroom to anyone who wanted to participate. I ended up writing 3 letters and found that having a place and time to use motivated me to write rather than doing it at home.

In the future, I think the school could have every student write a letter rather than have it be optional. Mr. Nicholl hopes to hand the project to a student and create a club out of it, and if anyone was interested or needed an SA/CAS idea then I would recommend contacting him.



# Top Musical Artists Word Search

by Erika Hatsuda

## Artists

O G E S D D U M F T L T E L L S B B Q K H H W I L  
S N T C Z J E W B M A A H F D I L A H K A N W Y K  
A B E N N L Q I D Y R B B C Z F T L D L M G A H D  
M B M D S I N T L V J T Z X U A L T S M E D U E I  
S O Q F I Q R O P Y O F K I H M N E L B N W G A R  
M O Q T Y R R P T J X R F F A N Y X F E I J C Z Y  
I L J E C S E D S H E E R A N O J T R C M U W V B  
T S V T W Y O C E N O L A M T S O P T L E I Y R O  
H Y H I F K F D T E O E K D J K R H H E W S X X U  
R L F H A C C T P I O O K Y B C O T X K R B X T B  
R T T L P P M W M R O K V T T A W H E O C P H R D  
P P L T D Z M I Q A C N R G N J V Z V G M U Q U K  
Q G P F S V O K N D O L O R V L I Y B L R S S O R  
A V A V B L F E M P O L C P I E G J S F D M H N U  
V M O X Z M E H U K L F I C J A W A M J C C A K D  
W L V Y O T V D Q E V N H C B H Y L G Z K W W N X  
K G D Z N X Z O B Y G G D Q M C C H A V S B M N I N  
J D L E M L H A Z U R M G X Z I U Q Z E B O M P L  
L V V C O E C T C L H F H H P M B A V G Q U E K Y  
V E J L S A L A J P A S A V E Z P G T B F C N C H  
S L C H L G W B Z S E I B S M F A B W D F Q D A Y  
A S W I B D Y Q X A F I F T H H A R M O N Y E L P  
K A M D H P X E A D O S F L H A C R C M M J S B Y  
K A R C Q P E O U V V U U A Y R N X I U X Z M G Y  
C S H H U R W I L M O F E M I W Q Z G T B R N I R

- BLACKPINK
- BTS
- CAMILACABELLO
- EDSHEERAN
- EMINEM
- FIFTHHARMONY
- HALSEY
- KHALID
- LITTLEMIX
- MICHAELJACKSON
- ONEDIRECTION
- POSTMALONE
- PRETTYMUCH
- PRINCE
- SAMSMITH
- SEVENTEEN
- SHAWNMEDES
- TAYLORSWIFT

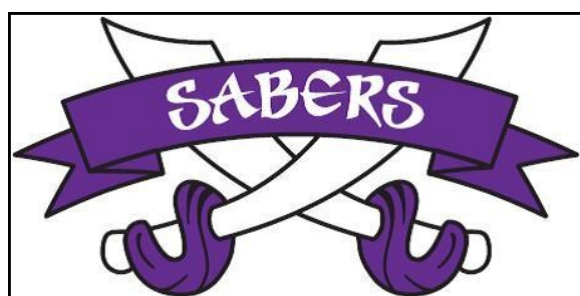


## SABERS SHOUT OUTS

Coach Heimer, AD

**Sabers Athletics Facebook page: Check it out.**

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/SabersAthletics/) ✓ [SabersAthletics/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/SabersAthletics/)



1. To SIS graduates: "Once a Saber, always a Saber."

To departed SSCers – Shuri, Akiho, Chisato, Nanako: "Who are we?!"

To departing Sabers TV personalities and production people – Arina, Maki, Airi, Mai, Mai, Ao, Wakaha, Akari, Hinako, Fumina, Chisato, Natsumi: "Until next time, go-o-o-o-o Sabers."

Thank you, Coach Entwistle and Coach Nikolic, for a great HS boys soccer season.

Thank you, Coach Kono, for single-handedly coaching the HS girls soccer team.

Congrats, Sabers girls soccer team: repeat AISA champions!

Coach Avery and Coach Ishiuchi-Ray: a little birdie says that badminton was a smash.

To SIS short stories students: "It isn't fair, it isn't right!"

### SaberStrong interview

**Tango reporter:** Mr. Algie, not everyone knows how multi-talented you are. English literature expert, of course. Sports fan. Singer-songwriter and musician. Fantasy Football player. Polyglot. And now you've added strength training to your repertoire. How long have you been lifting weights?

**Mr. Algie:** Modesty prevents me from boasting about my many talents, but, yes, there's not much I can't do, especially now that I have a 90kg deadlift under my belt. I've been strength training since the Fitness Floor opened up on the upper level of the gym about a year ago.

**Tango:** Tell us about the Fitness Floor.

**Algie:** The Sabers Fitness Floor is fantastic. It has all the equipment you need for a great workout. Everyone should get up there at least once.

**Tango:** What kind of training do you do?

**Algie:** Sabers training! Multijoint, compound heavy lifts, like deads, squats, cleans, some bench pressing and shoulder presses. You know, the kind of training that all Sabers athletes should be doing.

**Tango:** What kind of benefits do you get from strength training?

**Algie:** Well, I'm stronger and leaner than ever before. Lifting weights helps me relieve stress. And it's fun to train with Mr. Ray, Mr. Sheriff, and Mr. Heimer.

**Tango:** Is it a coincidence that the faculty members using the Fitness Floor most are all English teachers?

**Algie:** Well, as they say, *mens sana in corpore sano*.



## ***A Young Team with a Bright Future: High School Boys Soccer***

*by Mao Sakamoto and Eojin Lee*

It was fun playing for the AISA Sabers High School soccer team for the first time this season. As two Grade 9 players, we were new to the team. As rookies, the whole season was a fun one for us. The big tournament was of course AISA at the end of the season. We were knocked out in the semifinals, but went on to win the playoff to choose between third and fourth.

One interesting moment was a game in the group stages where the match went to a penalty shootout to see who would make the semifinals. Our captain, Neo, decided we would take the PKs in our tracksuits because it would make us feel more relaxed about the shootout. It must have worked because we won that shootout!

AISA was an exciting end to the season. Special thanks Mr. Entwistle and Mr. Nikolic for coaching us this year.

Even though we didn't come away with any trophies this year, we enjoyed our first year in the team. We are two of several new players in the team who will definitely grow in experience and skill over the next few years. It's a pretty promising situation and hopefully Sabers HS boys soccer will have some pleasing results in the years to come.

## ***High School Girls Softball Make Some Changes in Preparing for WJAA***

*by Erin Jung and Do Hee Kwon*

The Sabers Girls Softball Team have made some changes to their training routine as they look ahead to the WJAA tournament at Marist on 17th and 18th of May.

We have had a fun but challenging season so far. In order to prepare for what will be demanding competition at Marist we have been making some changes in how we approach training. In order to develop our skills, and bring some intensity to our training we split into groups and focus on specific things we need to work on. We then have competition between the groups within the team. This brings out the competitive spirit between us and makes practices even more enjoyable.

We haven't had a lot of success so far this season, but the main thing is that we have had a lot of fun, there is a good sense of team spirit, and we are totally looking forward to seeing how the team does at WJAA.





# Sabers Sports



## AISA GIRLS SOCCER: Back-to-back Champions

by Nanami Hasegawa

After having such a successful season last year, many of us were looking forward to this season. We were the reigning WJAA and AISA champions and we were determined to repeat this feat. However, things did not go as smoothly. With a new coach and a huge change in our varsity team, the adjustment was not easy this season. After a slightly disappointing finish in WJAA at 4th place, the team was hungry for revenge. It lit a fire within us and we boarded our plane to Seoul with high hopes to achieve our goal of becoming back-to-back AISA champions.

Once we landed, we went straight to the host school: Korea International School (KIS). We were paired up with our hosts and we immediately bonded. The fact that we were all soccer girls made striking conversations so much easier! Our banters continued as we watched our dinner sizzle at a local Korean barbeque restaurant. We concluded the day with a trip to the convenience store to get ready for the next morning.

We played our pool games on the following day. Our first game was against Seoul International School. Despite them having a strong midfielder with beautiful free kicks, our vice-captains, Leona and Ririko, each scored a goal to secure a 2-1 win. With renewed confidence and hungry stomachs, the Sabers enjoyed a meal provided by the KIS parents, which consisted of kimbap, toppogi and yangnyeom chicken. Once our stomachs were satisfied, we upheld the tradition of taking naps to rest for our next game against Chadwick. The naps paid off as this became a physical game. Most of the Chadwick players towered over us, but we put up a good fight and maintained possession of the ball. Despite having numerous chances, we were only able to score a goal and we conceded a goal during a counter attack. However, just as the Chadwick players thought they could end this game in a tie, Keito, our star forward, dribbled past multiple players to score the game-winning goal at the last minute. When the whistle blew, we were all screaming our heads off and were overjoyed to hear that we were first in our pool. This meant that we were going straight to the semi-finals the following day, so we could sleep in.

After shoving our sweaty shinguards in our backpacks, we followed our hosts to the city. I personally was able to enjoy a full meal of Koreanized tacos. The meat was prepared in a Korean barbeque style so it was interesting to have two food cultures (Korean and Mexican) at once. We also bumped into other AISA participants from Yokohama and Busan at a bubble tea place. A lot of us there were taking the IB diploma program, so we complained about our IB lives and how much tasks we had to catch up on as we sipped our tea.

Then came the following morning where we battled it out with Yokohama. This was the third time we played against each other this season so we knew each other very well. The Japanese rivalry came down to the last minutes, where the score was tied at 1-1. At the final minute, we were able to gain a corner kick and all of us knew that this was going to be the final chance to score. A perfect corner kick was delivered into the penalty box and our star freshman, Do Hee, was able to put the ball at the back of the net, scoring the game-winner. The final whistle blew moments after and again, we all screamed our heads off as this meant we were going to the finals.

We had some time before our championship game so we ate, slept, and attempted to do some homework. This was the last AISA soccer game for some of our players so we did our best to prepare ourselves. Our opponent was the host school, Korea International School, so the crowd was obviously rooting for KIS. Some of us were nervous, but the nerves went away once we started our team cheers. Having my teammates and hearing their laughter by my side put the pressure off and we were able to

play as one unit. Our passes went through the opponent's defense and the communication on the field was excellent. On the rare occasion that someone messed up, another player was always there to cover for them. We were constantly playing on their half of the field, so as a defender I had an enjoyable time watching superb plays from behind. However, the KIS defenders and goalkeeper were just able to hold off our offense and the game ended in a scoreless tie. This meant that the AISA champions were going to be determined through penalty kicks.

If you ask any soccer player if they enjoy having penalty shootouts, most of them would reply with a firm "no." The eerie silence is enough for anybody to crack under pressure, even among the best players. However, since we were on a roll, we were able to maintain our rhythm. Natsuki, our goalkeeper, especially controlled her nerves and we were able to bring back the gold plaque home once again.

Most of the games that were played came down to the final minutes. All of the teams played at a high level, so anybody could have brought home the title this season. This made the tournament more exciting than usual since nobody knew who would win the game until the final whistle was blown. There are so many people I would like to thank, but I especially would like to thank my teammates. Although it was not a smooth-sailing season, everyone remained positive and never failed to put a smile on my face. I am so proud of how we have grown as a team and how each individual stepped up their game throughout the season. Excited to go for the three-peat next year!

