



The Comet

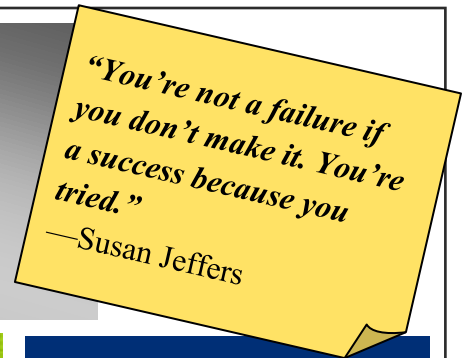


The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

Volume 20 | Issue 2 | December 2016

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From the Head of School



December is upon us and many are surely counting the days until the extended winter holiday. As I write this article, we are making the final preparations for our CIS/IB visit that will take place in less than 2 weeks' time; as you read this article the CIS/IB visit will be over and the visiting team members will be heading back to their home schools to do what they regularly do. The preparations for the visit were made over the past 2 years and demanded significant commitment from our entire community. Mr Sullivan and our three IB programme coordinators, Mr Bradley, Mr White, and Mr Rose, did a wonderful job of coordinating our efforts and putting in place the final touches that ensured our visit went well. On behalf of the school I would like to send a big thank you to the many community members who supported us in preparing for, and hosting, the visit. A special thank you as well to all the KIST parents who made time in their daily schedules to attend the CIS/IB parent sessions. The visit is now behind us and as we await the official response from CIS and the IB, we do so with optimism that this Spring we will be celebrating KIST having become a CIS accredited school. As both CIS and the IB are focused on continued school improvement, we welcome an evaluation team every five years – it is exciting to think that our next visit in 2022 will take place in our new gymnasium/classroom building.

Again this year, thanks to the efforts of our entire community, KISTival was a huge success. Over 3000 people from our school community and beyond attended and we raised over 6 million yen. Some of the funds raised this year will be used to replace our emergency announcement equipment and the remaining funds will be added to funds in place for the construction of our new gymnasium/classroom building, scheduled to commence in 2019. While KISTival is our major annual school fundraising event, it is also a wonderful opportunity for us to come together as a community, to further strengthen our community relationships, to demonstrate our school spirit, and collaborate in achieving something great. Well done everyone and thank you again for your commitment towards KISTival.

In the fall each year we have a couple of camps: a two-day technology camp to prepare our Grade 5 students for the upcoming PYP Exhibition and an overnight camp at the base of Mt. Fuji in Shizuoka for our Grade 7s, where students learn about farming and forestry (a full hands-on experience where students actually cut down trees using handsaws). Thank you to our parents for supporting these learning activities and to all of our teachers for the countless hours put in to planning for and attending these events.

Continued on next page

DATES TO REMEMBER



December 2016

- 9 (G1-G12) Clubs program ends
- 9 (K3-G5) LEAP classes end
- 9 (K1-G2) After care not available
- 12-14 (G9-G11) Semester 1 examinations
- 14 (G6-G12) SRC dance
- 15 (E) Winter celebration rehearsals
- 15 (E) Winter celebration (*Morning)
- 16 (K1-G2) After care not available
- 17-Jan 9 Winter vacation
- 19-20 Office open

January 2017

- 9 Staff development day (No school for students)
- 10 School resumes for all students
- 10-17 (G12) Semester 1 DP mock examinations
- 13 (G4-G5) Mathematics diagnostic testing
- 16 (K3-G5) Semester 2 LEAP classes resume this week
- 20 (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic testing (*Morning)
- 20 (S) End of Semester 1 (Half day for students)
- 20-22 (G9-G11) MUN conference in Shanghai
- 21 SAT@KIST
- 23 Semester 2 commences
- 23/24/26/27 2017-2018 enrollment interviews



Continued from previous page

Each November we hold our annual Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) event. Two big DEAR events in the Elementary School are the parent reading sessions, where parents read some of their favorite books with young readers, and the DEAR book parade, where students and teachers enjoy dressing up as a favorite book character and participate in a whole school parade around our ground area. Thank you to our Library Team for the hard work put in to plan and run this event each year, to the parent readers for sharing your passion for reading, to our Community Association for their strong support, and to all of the parents and other community members who came out to support the event.

We will finish off the 2016 calendar year by once again holding winter concerts for both school divisions. The Secondary School concert takes place the evening of December 2 (tonight!) and, due to the popularity of the Elementary School Winter Celebration with parents, this year we will have separate concerts for the K1-3 and the G1-5 students on December 16. Thanks to Ms Campbell and Mr Jones' collaborative efforts, this year the hand-made nengajyo (New Year's cards) activity will be opened up to allow the Secondary School students to participate as well. I look forward to enjoying our various winter concerts with many of you again this year.

As we say farewell to 2016 and look forward to the events waiting in 2017, I would like to send a big 'Ganbare' out to our Grade 12 students who are preparing for their first DP Mock Exam session that will take place the first week in January after the winter break. This exam session marks near completion of DP courses and the start of the official exam preparation season. During their final months of classes at KIST, the Grade 12s will focus their efforts on preparing for the culminating DP exams that take place in May. Good luck with your studies Grade 12s – we are all cheering for you!

I wish everyone a wonderful end to 2016 and look forward to welcoming everyone back on January 10, 2017.

Happy holidays everyone!

Jeffrey Jones
Head of School



School Calendar 2017-2018



To assist families planning overseas trips, the dates of school vacation periods for students and other important dates for the 2017-2018 school year are listed below.

Families are asked to make arrangements accordingly to ensure that students are back in Tokyo ready to start school after each

vacation period on the correct date.

The complete calendar will be distributed in June.

- [First day of school for students: August 21, 2017](#)
- [KISTival: October 28, 2017](#)
- [Autumn vacation: October 29 – November 5, 2017](#)
- [Winter vacation: December 16, 2017 – January 8, 2018](#)
(Classes resume for students from January 9, 2018)
- [Spring vacation: March 24 – 31, 2018](#)
- [Golden Week vacation: April 28 – May 6, 2018](#)
- [Last day of school for students: June 13, 2018](#)

From the Board President

Why do we learn?

Receiving a high level of education and acquiring wonderful knowledge and skills is meaningless unless you use it. Keeping what you have learned within yourself and not using it in the real world inhibits you from living a purposeful life. But what if you only use what you have learned for your own interests?

As I mentioned in the previous issue of *The Comet*, at KIST we aim to nurture elite individuals as expressed through our mission and vision to “develop competent and moral individuals committed to making the world a better, more peaceful place”.

Our students are fortunate that they have been given the opportunity to receive high quality education. A true elite is someone who utilizes what they have gained through their high level education for the good of society, not just for themselves. The world today is full of people who only consider their own interests. It is my hope that you will aim to be truly elite.

mission 

K. International School Tokyo provides academically motivated children from diverse cultural and social backgrounds with high quality education in a safe and nurturing environment to develop **competent** and **moral** individuals who make meaningful **contributions** to our global community.

K インターナショナルスクール東京は、文化的社会的に多様な背景をもった学習意欲のある子どもたちに、安全で人をはぐくむ環境の中で、質の高い教育を提供し、国際社会に貢献する、人格的に秀でた有能な若者を育成する。

learning for life

Yoshishige Komaki
Board President

KISTival 2016

Thanks to the dedication of the entire school community, KISTival 2016, held on Saturday, October 22, was a great success! Our sincere thanks goes to everyone who supported the festival this year and made it an enjoyable and highly profitable day.



Did you notice that the banners used at the entrance and on the gym stage were new this year? The large entrance banner was erected high up which enabled it to be seen clearly from the road. This contributed greatly to increasing the number of local residents who visited on the day. Altogether, over 3,000 people attended this year. The new stage banner and accompanying floral decorations also added greatly to the festive atmosphere in the gym. Both banners—including their preparation and set up—were donated by the K1 Hosono family. A big thank you to the Hosono family for your support!



If any parents or students have any suggestions to make KISTival even better next year, please contact Mrs Naito by e-mail at sayoko.naito@kist.ed.jp.



Revenue: ¥8,512,694 (however, outstanding individual family contributions of ¥120,000 are included)

Expenditure: ¥2,611,971

Profit: ¥5,900,723 (however, outstanding individual family contributions of ¥120,000 are included.)

- Revenue includes advance and on-the-day ticket and raffle sales; on-the-day cash sales; entrance fees; donations; advertising sponsorship; air slider free ride ticket sales; individual family contributions; participation fees from professional booths and Gakushuin Women's College; and Café Tomato donations.
- Expenditure includes food and activity booth expenses; ticket and advertisement printing; rental fees; garbage disposal; raffle prizes; decoration costs; miscellaneous materials costs; and sales settlement amounts for professional booths, Gakushuin Women's College, Café Tomato, and the Tassel and Habitat for Humanity booths.

Details of individual booths are as follows:

Booth	Grade	Activity	Sales	Expenses	Profit	
Parents	K3	Face painting	¥108,625	¥0	¥108,625	
	G1	Drinks	¥468,745	¥0	¥468,745	
	G2	Korean food	¥246,286	¥0	¥246,286	
	G3	Halloween snacks	¥397,543	¥0	¥397,543	
	G4 & 5	Bazaar	¥776,990	¥0	¥776,990	
	G6	Air slider ¹		¥605,856	¥199,674	¥406,182
		Game 1				
		Game 2				
	G7	Japanese food	¥234,620	¥0	¥234,620	
	G8	American food	¥239,000	¥0	¥239,000	
	G9	German food	¥182,443	¥0	¥182,443	
	G10	Chinese food	¥271,446	¥0	¥271,446	
G11	Italian food	¥253,225	¥10,812	¥242,413		
G12	Indian café	¥152,250	¥0	¥152,250		
Students	G6A	Musical games	¥8,500	¥0	¥8,500	
	G6B	Bowling	¥38,875	¥0	¥38,875	
	G7A	Bubble tea / Soda	¥76,750	¥0	¥76,750	
	G7B	Bag toss / Nerf game	¥24,250	¥6,102	¥18,148	
	G8A	Soccer challenge & bottle flip	¥20,125	¥0	¥20,125	
	G8B	Game booth	¥29,250	¥0	¥29,250	
	G9A	Game booth	¥129,250	¥0	¥129,250	
	G9B	Chocolate bananas	¥126,250	¥0	¥126,250	
	G10A & B	Haunted house	¥157,875	¥23,700	¥134,175	
	G11A & B	Smores	¥45,750	¥12,000	¥33,750	
Staff	Staff 1	Philippine BBQ	¥425,625	¥83,486	¥342,139	
	Staff 2	Thai food	¥100,750	¥36,008	¥64,742	
	Staff 3	Crepes & smoothies	¥84,300	¥22,779	¥61,521	

¹ G6 Air slider: Sales include free ride ticket sales. Expenses include slide rental and free ride wrist band costs.





Elementary School News

Random acts of...the IB learner profile?

Every so often we hear stories about random acts of kindness. Occasionally these stories make the news and, as some online readers express, their faith in humanity is restored. I believe that these random acts of kindness occur more often than we think and when I witness them I cannot help but make connections to the IB learner profile. Can you identify the learner profile traits demonstrated in these examples?

- A few weeks ago when our Grade 5 students were returning home from Tech Camp, I was told some of our students gave up their seats for some elderly passengers.
- As I entered the elevator in my apartment building with bags in each hand, a young child asked me which floor I was going to and pushed the button for me.
- On a recent family vacation, I overheard a young girl ask her mother how the water got to the top of the waterslide.

Random Acts of Kindness

- At our school festival I heard a story where a visitor hadn't noticed they had dropped some tickets. A student picked up the tickets and quickly returned them to the person who had dropped them.

Examples of the IB learner profile which we can learn from are all around us. Our teachers consistently model and point out examples of the learner profile witnessed at school. Be on the lookout for examples which you can share with your own children. Whenever I notice a random act of the learner profile, it always brings a smile to my face!

Kevin Yoshihara
Elementary School Principal

PYP News

Windows to the world

As the PYP Coordinator, I spend a lot of my time observing the progression of our units of inquiry throughout the grade levels. One way that classes highlight and demonstrate their learning is by way of hallway bulletin boards. These displays offer the viewer the opportunity to dive into the units through the child's eyes and experience the development of learning over time.

Even with the full knowledge of what is involved in the lessons, I'm literally amazed at the depth and sophistication of the students' understanding of some rather complex and interrelated concepts and ideas. In my amazement, I realize how important it is for our young students to have an audience to validate their understandings and expressions which they have chosen to share. In this light, I encourage everyone to take a look at the display boards found throughout the school in order to become part of the conversation that our students are having with the world of ideas, concepts and deeds. These boards represent just the beginning of a rapport that they will have with their own future. These are the very conversations that will enable them to step out into the world and make positive, valuable and enlightened contributions to the local and global communities.

Clay M. Bradley
PYP Coordinator



The Proper Way to Brush our Teeth by the K1s



In K1, as part of our unit about people who help us in our community which enables us to learn, parents volunteered and shared their jobs and talked about how they help people. Hugo's mom visited and talked about her job as a dentist and taught us how to brush our teeth correctly. Firstly, brush the outside part of the teeth (the side facing the lips). Secondly, brush the inside area of the teeth (the side facing the tongue). Lastly, brush the top and bottom (the areas we use to chew food). She explained how to take care of our teeth to ensure they stay healthy.

As a craft activity, we made our own toothbrushes using popsicle sticks and sponges. We glued the sponge to the popsicle stick and waited until they had dried. After drying we took laminated paper mouths showing teeth that were dirty with whiteboard marker to pretend it was residue left from eating and drinking. The children were principled when they brushed the teeth thoroughly to remove all the dirt from the teeth. They were reflective and knowledgeable when they remembered how to brush teeth in the correct manner as taught by Hugo's mom.

We also incorporated literacy with the letter we were learning that week, which was the letter 'T'. The students learned new vocabulary such as tooth, teeth, toothbrush, toothpaste and more words that start with this letter.

Claire Yoneyama
K1A Teacher



K1 and K2 News

Buddy reading time

In the Elementary School, we have a time called 'buddy reading'. During the buddy reading time, we match up with students from a different grade so that the upper grade students can read books and tell stories to students in younger grades.

In K1, our buddy reading time is slightly different from this. There are two K1 classes, and both classes are buddies with G5B. During their reading session with G5B, the K1s can do so many things as they have more one-on-one attention. For their last unit of inquiry, 'Who we are', the G5Bs took the students from K1B on a walk around the school to find out about our school community. They also supported K1A students in a craft activity to make a representation of what they want to be when they grow up. The G5Bs also supported the K1s with their math and literacy activities. The amazing thing is that the G5B students are taking action to prove that they care about their young partners. Our G5B friends spend time in the K1 classrooms even during their recess time. They take the young ones to the toilet, they encourage the K1 children to eat their lunches, and more.

It is very heartwarming to see these young children greeting their partners by name, waving to them whenever they see each other in the hallways, giving gifts to their partners, telling stories to their parents at home and so on.

Even if your child doesn't have any siblings, they are having similar experiences looking after a younger friend, or having fun with an older friend.

How do young learners learn?

Young children learn so many things through their experiences. Benjamin Franklin said, "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn." This is true for all of us but



K1A

especially so for young learners who are still learning about the world in which they live.

The K2 students are learning about different kinds of materials and states of matter in their current unit of inquiry, 'How the world works'. They used their five senses to investigate various types of materials and their properties before conducting some experiments to inquire deeper. The children then created their very own boats. They tried to remember what they learned about various materials before choosing some recyclables to build boats that would hopefully float. Then they had their first launching ceremony in the kindergarten playground. Some of the boats floated and some unfortunately sank. The children took the results, reflected on them, and then spent another day making their boats better. The boats were relaunched, with most of them floating this time. Through this project, the K2s learned hands-on which materials they need to use (light and absorbent materials) to make their boats float.

To support young learners, it is helpful if the learning uses meaningful activities and holds relevance to their everyday lives. For example, reading a calendar together will help them understand the difference between ordinal numbers and normal numbers;



K2A



K1B

following a recipe to cook a pancake will increase their understanding of measurement and volume.

Research also shows that reading and a love for books is directly related to academic success. We would all like our children to be book lovers. Listening to books being read aloud is one of the most fascinating times for young learners – as we can recall from our own experiences – where children venture into a completely new world through stories. Asking them lots of open-ended questions after reading books will help develop critical thinking skills and reading comprehension abilities...there are no right answers for open-ended questions! Children can simply enjoy conversations with you, the read, too...this will support the growth of their communication skills. They will also learn that writing holds information, writing relays messages, and that it is important to be able to read and write.

The winter vacation is approaching. During the vacation, please find time to engage in fun activities and turn them into meaningful learning opportunities for your child.

Eri Ozawa

Early Childhood Coordinator (K1, K2) / K1B Teacher



K2B

Anti-Bullying Activities



Hello everyone. My name is Kana Furnival and I am the Student Care Coordinator for the Elementary School. My role in this position is split into three main parts. Firstly, I counsel pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Secondly, I

coordinate and support teachers in the implementation of our life skills programming related to a range of social emotional areas such as bullying prevention. Thirdly, I support teachers in creating Individual Education Plans (IEPs) which identify a child's immediate learning needs and puts arrangements into place to support the child in accessing the curriculum.



To celebrate National Anti-Bullying Week in the UK, we created an anti-bullying display in the foyer of the Elementary building called "Don't be a bully, be a friend". Teachers and pupils have contributed to it by writing comments on how to stop bullying, and the importance of friendship.

We also organised an anti-bullying assembly with Ms Thomas, Mr Miller and Ms Cat. Grade 4 pupils who volunteered, wrote and performed a play on stage. This was followed by all the G4 and K2A pupils singing an original song called "Power for Good", focusing on how you can use the power of your words and actions to stop bullying. Live music was performed by Mr Collins and Mr Miller, with Mr Wilson teaching the lyrics to the rest of the K1 to G5 pupils, so that all could sing the song together at the end. Mr Collins and Ms Karen also contributed time for this in their own music lessons, by practicing the song with them in order to perform it perfectly, and get the amazing message across. I hope your child felt inspired about anti-bullying from this assembly.



Kana Furnival
Student Care Coordinator (Elementary)

Pumpkin Carving in G1B

This autumn season, the Grade 1B students enjoyed the Halloween tradition of pumpkin carving! We used our math skills in a variety of ways in this experience. The class discussed which unit (grams or kilograms) would be appropriate to measure the weight of the pumpkin, the students put forward their estimates, and then we weighed it!

Each student created a design for the pumpkin's face and the class voted for their favourite. We talked about data management – how could we best record the votes? We used tally marks. The students really enjoyed putting their hands inside the pumpkin and pulling out the strange insides. They were very excited to see their design carved into the pumpkin, and the final result – a Jack O' Lantern!

Finally, the students wrote their estimate for how many seeds we had taken out of the pumpkin. Ms Campbell took the seeds home, roasted them in the oven with salt, and counted them! (Approximately!) Can you believe there were more than four hundred seeds inside our pumpkin? We really enjoyed having them for a snack the next day!

Grade 1B really enjoyed applying our mathematical skills to this interesting Halloween tradition from North America!

Jennifer Campbell
Grade 1B Teacher



*Xintong, Luna,
Tristan, Jiei*



Lauren, Max, Tyler



Pimpisut



G1B and their Jack O' Lantern



How Exploration Changed Our World



Grade 4 were fortunate enough to have a guest speaker visit earlier this semester to help wrap up their first unit of inquiry on exploration and discovery. The speaker was Mr Subodhana Wijeyeratne, a PhD candidate from Harvard University whom is currently based in Tokyo to research the history of rocketry in Japan. His presentation was entitled "How Exploration Changed the World", and he covered everything from recent developments in space exploration to the premodern origins of globalisation.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the lively presenting style of 'Mr Subo', as well as his selection of thought-provoking images, which included ancient maps and creatures with rather unique features (the star-nosed mole was a particular favourite!). The students' interest was certainly piqued throughout, highlighted by their eagerness to ask the speaker many questions about what they had seen and heard. Unfortunately, Mr Subo did not have enough time to respond to all the questions that afternoon, but he kindly answered these later via email. Here is an example of an interesting question posed by one of the students:

Student: *Would you go on a one way trip to Mars?*

Mr Subo: *I don't think so! I love Earth too much, and Mars is just one big red desert. I think I'd get bored after a while. But then again, it does have the biggest volcano in the whole solar system (more than 20 km high!) AND the biggest canyon (thousands of km long and hundreds deep!) AND two moons, so I'm sure most people who go will have a great time!*

With the great success of this event, I look forward to giving the G4 students more opportunities to listen to and engage with other guest speakers as a way of encouraging their development as inquisitive and knowledgeable PYP learners.

Bethan Thomas
G4A Homeroom Teacher



Elementary ELS

The language of math

Math is a cornerstone of our cognitive development, and a part of everyone's daily life at school and far beyond that. We know how vital learning math is, but it can be easy to think of math lessons as being all about calculations that we can do well without really needing any language. All topics in math, however, are based on concepts and reasoning, and language is essential for these. So in fact, math lessons are full of new terminology for just-learned ideas, and of all the sentences we put together to discuss these concepts and to explain our reasoning. Two of the things we do at KIST to help our students learn math are to make time for discussing the particular topic or a given problem, and to highlight the words needed to make this discussion lead to a more precise understanding of the concepts. These photos show some of the routines we have in elementary for creating discussion and explicitly teaching math vocabulary.

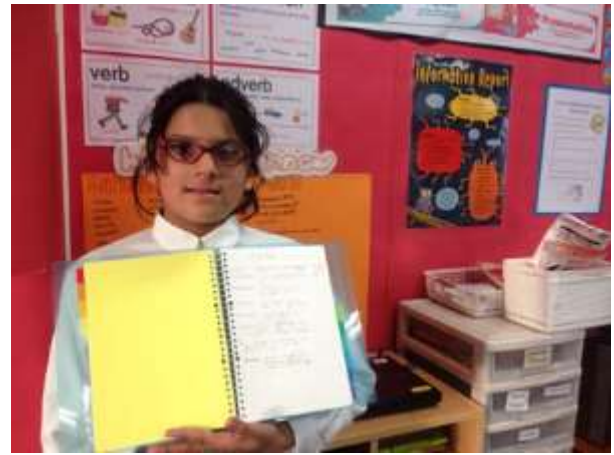
How can you help at home? An expert in the field of teaching math to children with English as a second language – Judit Moschkovich of the University of California – has 4 key principles for teaching mathematics, and the final one states: "Home languages provide resources for mathematical reasoning and communication." So, whenever you pick up in your mother tongue a math discussion that was started at school, you know you are helping your child develop mathematical concepts and reasoning.

Rachel Parkinson

Elementary ELS Coordinator / G5 ELS Instructor



2B's Vardaan and Madhav in Mr Tim's LEAP class show their graphic organizers of the math language we use for the concept of "being equal".



Diya (G5B) shows the math section of her vocabulary binder. G5s use their vocabulary binder to record key words along with features, such as example sentences and pictures, to help them remember and use the words.

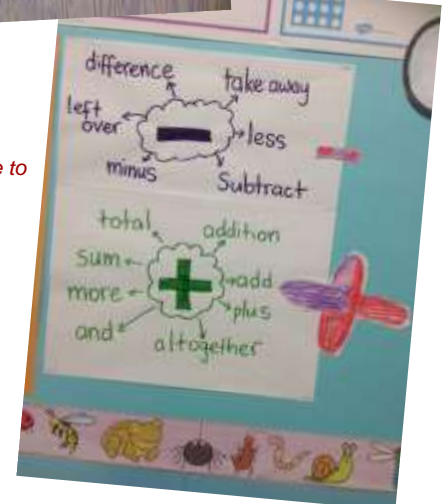


G5B's Yusei and Tatsuto discuss the patterns they find in the 12 x 12 multiplication table, and how they can use these patterns to help solve division problems.



These pictures with labels in the K3B classroom are used to reinforce the concept of comparing length and prompt discussion about it.

K3Bs worked together to make this chart of all the vocabulary they could use to talk about addition and subtraction.



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LEAP News



Hello, KIST Community! There has been a bit of confusion about making changes to LEAP applications (i.e. adding a Math/English course, changing the frequency of a course, etc.). If you have submitted an application and would like to add a second course and/or make a change to your initial application, please do not submit a second application, as our application program will not process the second submission. Please e-mail me directly at leap@kist.ed.jp to make any additions or changes to your application. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.



There will be a small change to LEAP, specifically in how the classes will be presented to parents. In Semester 2, we will no longer be putting together and sending home portfolios of the students' work. Beginning in January 2017, we will be sending work home in the students' A4 plastic folder, as well as a newsletter three times a semester, via the school e-mail system.



The first newsletter will be sent out within the first two weeks of LEAP classes, wherein the teachers of each class will briefly introduce themselves, as well as give a brief example of what can be expected out of the

class that semester. The second will be sent out halfway through the semester, briefly explaining what has been covered in the class so far, as well as the overall progress of the students within the class. The third will be sent at the end of the semester and will detail what was covered in the class, how the students performed in the class, and ways of assisting your child's continued progress over the following break.

With this new system, we hope to give you, the parents, a better understanding of your child's work and progress in their LEAP classes through teacher explanations and pictures of the students in their class environment.

As always, we thank you for your continued support. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at leap@kist.ed.jp. Let's learn together!

Amber Guarente
LEAP Coordinator



CA News

Service committee

Let's raise ¥100,000 and buy school supplies by collecting Bellmarks!

One of the activities of the Community Association's Service Committee is collecting Bellmarks. You can obtain Bellmarks with points from over 2,000 everyday products. Each point counts as ¥1. We have saved ¥84,095 so far, and our target for this school year is to raise a further ¥16,000 to reach ¥100,000. The money saved will be used to purchase school supplies, and 10% of every Bellmark point is used by the Bellmark Foundation to support schools in areas of need or in developing countries.

Let's collect Bellmarks together. If you find a Bellmark, please cut it out and bring it to school. Collection boxes are located at reception and in the waiting area beside the main office. Thank you for your cooperation!

KIST Community Association (CA) Service Committee



Hello from KIPS

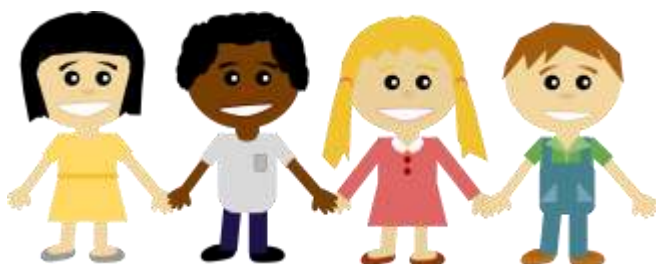
My name is Crescenda Long, and I am writing from the end of my third week as the new P2 teaching assistant at KIPS. To those whom I haven't yet had the chance to meet, hello! And to those whom I have already had the pleasure, thank you for everything that you have done to help make my time here so successful and enjoyable.

I originally hail from Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, a small town located in the north-eastern United States. I have intermittently lived and worked in Japan for about five years previously, first as an Assistant Language Teacher in Ehime with the JET Program, and later as a Native English Teacher for Amity in Ibaraki. My most recent job was as an assistant teacher at a preschool in the U.S. This is my first time working for an international preschool here in Japan, as well as my first time working in Tokyo. I must confess that I'm a 'country girl' at heart, and am still adjusting to the frenetic pace of the city! Fortunately for me, however, KIPS has made me feel right at home.

It is a given that the children are wonderful. Their constant energy and endless fascination for the world around them reminds me every day why I chose to be a teacher. I am greeted each morning by the sound of their bright, innocent laughter, and really – what better way is there to start a day than that? Under the watchful supervision of the KIPS staff, they are able to play and learn inside a new facility which is truly clean and modern. KIPS is located along a busy road (which, at least recently, seems to always be under construction!) However, the atmosphere inside the building is one of tranquility and calm. I credit this in part to the school's neutral color palate and clean lines, and in part to the efficiency of the staff, who work together with parents to ensure that we are all providing the best environment possible for the students.

Having the opportunity to watch children discover their own personalities and grow as individuals is immensely rewarding. Being able to do so in such a warm, bright place is doubly so. I feel honored to have found a place here, and look forward to teaching and learning with you all as the year progresses.

Crescenda Long
KIPS P2 Teaching Assistant



New Face

Since the last issue of *The Comet*, we have welcomed a new staff member to our team—**Crescenda Long**—who has joined the staff at the newly re-opened KIPS as a Teaching Assistant with the P2 class for 2-year-olds. On behalf of the school community, we wish you all the best in your new role and hope that you enjoy your time with us.



Crescenda Long
Teaching Assistant
(KIPS P2)

MYP News

MYP parent workshops stimulate thought and discussion

Since September, KIST has hosted two workshops aimed at parents of MYP students. The workshops, conducted in English with Japanese translation, allowed parents to take a hands-on approach to some of the issues connected to learning in the MYP.

The first session was aimed at parents who are new to KIST or new to the MYP here at the school. This group spent time considering three topics: how assessment is conducted, the expectations for MYP Service, and the nature of report cards in the secondary school. The new parents examined how teachers approach assessing student success. They heard from a group of students who shared their Service experiences in past years. And they had a session with Secondary School Principal Mr Cowe in which he highlighted the main features of the MYP report cards.

The second workshop featured the parents of Grade 10 students. Parents worked through the main expectations of the Personal Project, the culminating activity for Grade 10 students. The parents got to meet with students who completed the project successfully last year, and were able to gain insights into the steps students can take to complete the project at a high level of performance.

These parent workshops were good experiences. Parents had a chance to meet and talk to other families and talk about the MYP approach to learning. They also had a chance to see more deeply into the work of their children and how this work helps prepared them for the future.

Robert White
MYP Coordinator



New to the MYP, parents discuss assessment, service and MYP reports.



Riko (G11B) shares her Personal Project experience with parents.



Parents new to the MYP gained insight on the nature of assessment in the program.



Examining how teachers assess the MYP Personal Project.

Grade 6 MYP Visual Arts

Cultural self image – Portraiture

Grade 6 have been investigating the ways in which we represent ourselves through our emotions and how we represent our cultural identities. They have experimented with using colour to portray their moods, and looking at personal symbols of culture.

They have also studied Angelica Dass' work the Humanae project, looking at the beauty in all different skin tones. Students could discuss how we are all unique and different; and that our multicultural school community is richer because of this. They have developed their understanding of watercolors to create their own skin tones through media practice pages within their journals, reflecting on their individual successes.

Students completed A3 self-portraits as part of their summative assessment for criteria A and B, articulating their chosen colour ways and demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of artists studied such as Van Gogh and Kahlo.

More information on the Humanae project may be viewed at the link below:

<http://www.angelicadass.com/humanae-work-in-progress>

Luke Jones

MYP/DP Visual Arts Teacher



Keanu

Aditya



Mai



Nehal



Shona



Harunosuke



Hotomi



Jiaying



Hamsika



Tia



Hajin



Eanya



Sola



KIST Wall of Honour



In the lobby of the main building, you may have noticed our 'Wall of Honour'. This initiative was introduced about three years ago as a way to recognize students in Grades 6 to 8 for demonstrating Learner Profile attributes. One male and one female student for each class is nominated by their classmates for an award. A ceremony is held towards the end of each semester to announce the recipients and present them with a certificate. Afterwards, the recipients leave their handprint on the wall to 'leave their mark' at



KIST in this colorful display of their exemplary contributions.

We hope you enjoy the display and that you too look forward to watching it grow over the years to come.



Swimming Stars



The Buccaneers Invitational swimming event was held at St. Mary's International School on October 22 and 23, in which **Igor** (G10A) and I represented KIST against 17 other teams from other schools. Despite being only two people, we were able to earn 6 medals, landing KIST in 12th place out of 18.

We did our best during those two days, and as a result, I received gold medals for 50 m freestyle, 100 m butterfly, 100 m breaststroke, 200 m breaststroke, and 200 m individual medley, and a silver medal for the 200 m freestyle. Igor also swam for the 200 m Individual medley and 50m freestyle, finishing in 4th and 5th place respectively.



This event has been a good experience for both of us, allowing us to have a fun time with students from other schools.

Xiangyu (Tom) (G10A)



World Scholar's Cup

From Tokyo to Thailand to America: Our World Scholar's Cup experience

This was my first experience at a World Scholar's Cup event. I did not know what to expect. I was in Team 506. I was in a team of three with **Kishore** (G7A) and **Aditya** (G8B). This was a rather interesting experience as this was the first time for any of us to participate in such an event.

At the regional round in Tokyo, the first day was a very hectic day. On the first day, we had an opening ceremony by the organizers of World Scholar's Cup giving us a brief overview of the event and the competition. By the time, the ceremony ended, my groupmates and I were completely stressed out, we had no idea what we were about to face. Everyone around us was studying intensely with multiple different kinds of study material, which was when we realized we were the least prepared group out of everyone. Following the opening ceremony, we did different activities such as essay writing and the scholar's challenge. As we continued to complete activities, the more worried and nervous we were, because we had no clue of what we were doing. By the time we reached lunch time, we had completely given up on this competition. Later that day, we debated other teams as the last event of the day.

The next day, we had a team quiz where we answer questions about different topics, from a variety of subjects. And later that day, there was a debate showcase and talent show, showcasing talented debaters and performers. To conclude the two-day event, there was an awards ceremony. Our team was not expecting any medals at all, as we knew we were so unprepared that we failed every activity miserably. However, we achieved 8 medals as a team and qualified for the global round in Bangkok.



Nimit, Kishore and Aditya

Our team decided to also participate in the global round, but this time we made it our goal to practice and prepare as much as we can so we are able to do well this time around. We practiced throughout the whole summer, even during summer school. Throughout the global round, the activities were the same however we were way more confident of what we did due to our preparation and effort that we had put into this. Adding to the events, this round there were two events, known as the scavenger hunt and scholar's ball, both of which are socializing events. By the end of this round we got 14 medals as a team and hope to do well in the last round in America.

Overall, I'm glad I took part in this competition, it was a great experience for me where I learned a lot of new things and got to interact with different people around the world. Even though we were not well prepared from the start, I learnt that teamwork was as important as studying. I would recommend everyone else to give this competition a shot next year, because it is a great way to develop public speaking and essay writing skills, and to also help improve on collaboration as well as thinking skills. And, even if you don't win any medals, you are sure to win a stuffed alpaca!!

Nimit (G9B)

Explanation Day 2016

On Saturday, October 15, we held our annual Explanation Day for prospective families. The day was divided into two sessions: English in the morning and Japanese in the afternoon. This year, we welcomed over 200 families throughout the day. Visitors listened to explanations about the school and the curriculum, and also participated in tours of the school's facilities.

Families of current KIST students who are interested in enrolling other siblings are reminded of the following application deadlines:

Due date for **January** entry: **November 18, 2016**

Due date for **April/August** entry: **January 9, 2017**

Applications will also be accepted after these dates; however, it is possible that some classes may be full.



For more details on the application process, please check our **Admissions Handbook** at the link below.

<http://www.kist.ed.jp/node/41>

Craig Larsen

Director of Admissions and Personnel

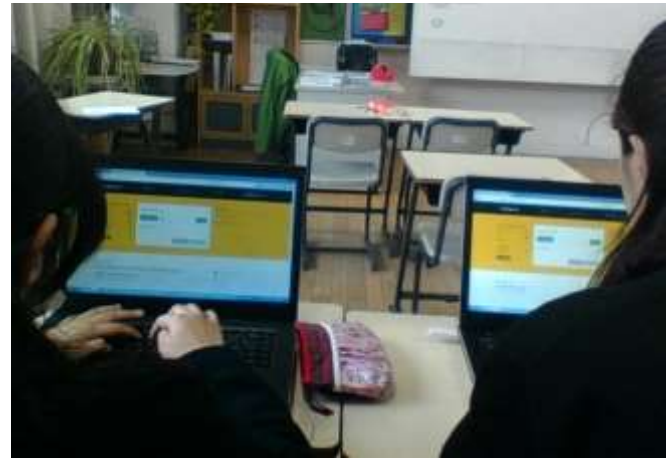
Secondary ELS

Academic writing at KIST

Students at grades 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 who are enrolled in the Academic Writing Course are working extra hard in the mornings at KIST to improve their writing skills in English. This semester so far has been focused on developing writing skills through reading the news and keeping a reading journal at grades 6 to 8. At all levels the Academic Writing Course is also challenging students to learn how to write for different purposes and practice their written production skills in various academic formats and styles.

A whole school approach to using a writing correction code has been introduced this year and students are being encouraged to use the code to identify common errors in their writing. Another aim of the AW course is to teach students how to understand and use the code to edit and redraft their own writing.

Recently, KIST has purchased a full subscription to an online program called www.vocabulary.com which allows students to practice assigned academic word lists. A key benefit of the site is that the classroom teachers and ELS instructors can easily monitor the progress of their students.



Congratulations to these AW students who are leading their grade in practicing their vocabulary lists: **Shin** (G6A), **Tatsunori** (G7A), **Aidan** (G8A), **Emily** (G9A) and **Tian Wei** (G10B).

As the mornings grow colder, we hope that the AW students will continue to make it in to class on time to find a cozy room to get writing!

Donna Linnett
Secondary School ESL Coordinator

Fire Drill

Our first fire drill for 2016 was held on Wednesday, November 9. For this drill, the scenario was that a fire had broken out in the school café on the first floor of the main secondary building during Secondary lunch break. In reflecting on the drill, we found that there was a lot of talking amongst students while teachers were taking the roll on the field.



Following the drill, the No. 9 Riot Force, Special Rescue Team from the Fukagawa Police Department held a rescue demonstration. They demonstrated a rescue of an injured person from the rooftop of the West Building under a scenario of a major disaster. Elementary students cheered the team on as they came down from the rooftop with the "person" on a stretcher using ropes. During the demonstration, the "DJ police" provided a commentary in Japanese which was translated to English by **Nina** (G12A) from the top of the command post vehicle. Thank you Nina!



Secondary SRC



The specialized committee members for this school year have been chosen!



Sports committee

On December 5, 6 and 7 during lunch recess, the Sports Committee will be holding the house vs. house KIST League.

The winning house will receive a pizza party!!

Students, join to represent your house and have fun!



Jin Il (G10A)

Ke Yi (G11B)

Saki (G8A)



Broadcasting committee

The Broadcasting Committee is in charge of creating updates and promotional videos for the students. They are currently

seeking more members so if you have a **passion for speaking or making videos**, this may be a highly enjoyable experience for you!



Armaan (G7B)

Amartya (G12A)

Michiru (G9A)



Arts committee

The Arts Committee will soon be holding the first lunch concerts of the 2016-2017 school year. **If you are interested in performing in any future lunch concerts, we are always open to applicants.**

To apply, please contact the Arts Committee Head, **Ibuki (G11B)** iy2860@email.kist.ed.jp. For any further information, please feel free to ask any Arts Committee member.



Ibuki (G11B)

Ji Hye (G9A)

Michiko (G8A)

Hinako (G9B)

Miu (G11B)

Upcoming events

Winter concert (Secondary)

The 2016 Winter Concert will be held on December 2. This year, we have a variety of enjoyable performances. Stay tuned for more information regarding the event!

SRC dance

The first SRC dance of this year will be held on December 14. The theme is...

WINTER WONDERLAND

As usual, expect a range of foods, festive decorations and great music!

Let your voice be heard.

Secondary SRC



Spotlight on Clubs



Beginner's Soccer Club (Elementary)

Every Friday, my team – consisting of students from Grades 1 and 2 – has a wonderful time wrapping up the week with soccer!

We start with warm up exercises such as sumo stretch, star-banana jumps and the colour-cone game, followed by a team meeting where we discuss the 'target of the day' beginning with 'C', such as Control! Cooperate! Communicate! We then practice basic soccer moves such as passing, throwing-in and shooting. Finally, we enjoy a game of soccer and end with a final meeting to reflect on our performances.

Everybody has improved drastically during the semester, and all the members show great team work in knowing their playing positions and in communicating with each other.

On November 12, the team performed excellently at the soccer tournament held at The American School in Japan. I was proud to see the team playing their very best in their cool team shirts. The students were showing brilliant sportsmanship. I wish I could share the joy of playing soccer with more students. Through soccer, I hope that students can gain confidence and experience the pure enjoyment of playing a team sport.

I would like to thank Mr Ota, Mr Norwood, the KIST staff and parents of the team for their continuous support.

Anna Hiraoka
Club Supervisor



French Club (Secondary)

Once a week, secondary students from all grades come together to learn French in a relaxed atmosphere. Lessons focus mainly on developing basic communication skills so that students can make use of their knowledge the next time they travel to a French speaking country! Even though KIST students are so busy at school, I was amazed by their dedication and desire to learn French...even on a Friday afternoon!



Is it useful to speak French?

French is spoken by more than 220 million people in the world. It is also the sixth most spoken language after Mandarin Chinese, English, Hindi, Spanish and Arabic. While French is known worldwide as the language of love, it is also the language of diplomacy. It is an official language of many international organizations, such as the United Nations, NATO and the International Olympic Committee. For students interested in pursuing a career in international affairs, speaking French can definitively open doors.

Jessica Bouchard-Belanger
Club Supervisor



Library News

Drop Everything And Read 2016

Once again, KIST Libraries organized our yearly **DEAR** (Drop Everything And Read) event. Once a week, Mr Larsen in the office let everyone know it was time to **Drop Everything And Read!** From K1 students to G12, the whole school took twenty minutes out of their busy days to enjoy a good book, magazine or



newspaper.



Did you see our new banners on display by the front gate? What about the DEAR posters around the school? The

Library Team appreciates all the teachers and students who posed with their favorite books and helped us promote the new Sakura Medal books for 2017.



We hope you had a chance to add your thoughts to the **What does reading mean to you?** DEAR banner near the secondary lunch room. If not, stop by and take a sticky note. What does reading

mean to you?

On Friday, November 25, Elementary School students showed off their love of reading at the DEAR Book Character Parade! We were joined by students from KIPS and two nearby Japanese nursery schools who came to see KIST Elementary students' creativity and enthusiasm.



Grade 4 and 5 students were able to enter in a costume contest, judged by Ms Helen and Mr John. Congratulations to **Ayami** (G5B), **Yusei** (G5B) and **Anju** (G5B) for "most creative," and our "triplets," **Kazuhiro** (G4A), **Genta** (G4B) and **Sebastian** (G4B).

Thank you to everyone who participated in DEAR, and especially to our parent-storyteller volunteers: Ms Sunanda, mother of Rihana (G1A); Ms Sarika, mother of Muskaan (G5A) and Vardaan (G2B); Mr Jones, father of Sumire (G4A); and Ms Heather, mother of Rebecca (G4B)!



Reading aloud with your children is an excellent way to support language development. We hope that you will continue to support your students' enthusiasm for books and reading for lifelong learning.

Community Association book donation

KIST Library Team would like to extend a big "Thank you!" to our Community Association members who helped out with DEAR, and for supporting collection development at KIST. KIST Libraries purchased several new books thanks to the generosity of the Community Association: Sidekicked; Lumberjanes volumes 2 and 3; Princess Princess Ever After; The Singing Bones; Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women; Razzle Dazzle Unicorn: Another Phoebe and Her Unicorn Adventure; The Sleeper and the Spindle; Every Falling Star: The True Story of How I Survived and Escaped North Korea; Flora and the Flamingo; and William Shakespeare's The Phantom Menace: Star Wars Part the First.

Our students are already enjoying these new additions to their libraries! Razzle Dazzle Unicorn was checked out less than a day after it arrived at school!

KIST Library Team



Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present **Anna Holdaway** who joined us in September 2012. Since then, she has held various roles as a teaching assistant in K3, an administrative assistant in the school office, and the former LEAP Coordinator. After gaining her teaching qualification, she moved back into the classroom in August 2016 and is now the teacher for K3B.



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

I grew up in the countryside, about 60 km out from Melbourne, in a place called Kilmore. My high school is still the only school in Australia to exclusively offer the IB programme, and not offer a local high school qualification—just like KIST!

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

Japan—it's why I'm here!

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

My grandmothers—both have passed on. One I was named for, and died before I was born. The other was one of the strongest women I have ever known and I would love to speak to her again.

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

I can kill it at karaoke 😊

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

I'm a New Zealand citizen because my parents are, but I've never lived there!

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

My health.

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

Obnoxiously positive.

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

There isn't much I would change in my life, but I would tell my teenage self to worry less about what others think and pursue my own interests more.

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

Keeping my desk tidy...

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

Making mistakes is how your brain learns what not to do. Take risks and be fearless!



Ms Holdaway (right) enjoying KISTival with Ms Hiraoka (left) and Ms Lee (center).

Office Updates

Using images of school activities and events

It has come to our attention that members of the school community upload photographs and videos of school activities and events to the Internet in personal blogs or on public websites such as YouTube.



While you are free to upload images of your own child or those of other children or adults whose permission you have received, we would like to remind you that uploading images containing persons whose approval you have not received is a violation of privacy rights.

If you wish to upload images to the Internet or use them in other forms of media—both electronic and/or print—please ensure that you obtain permission from all persons featured and refrain from using images of those whose approval has not been received.

If you are currently using images of school community members without their permission, we ask for your cooperation in removing/deleting them immediately.

Absences and late arrivals

As mentioned in the last issue of *The Comet*, e-mail is the preferred method of communication when reporting instances of student absence and late arrival.



Thank you to all the families who have supported us in adhering to this policy. As a reminder, e-mails should be sent **directly to the school office at info@kist.ed.jp before the start of school.**

We have noticed, however, that some families occasionally send messages to contacts@kist.ed.jp. This address is only used to send out E-Communications messages—please refrain from using it to send general messages to the school.

Student withdrawals

At this time of year, it is common for some families to move to other countries after being transferred for work. In this situation, please be sure to submit the **Student Withdrawal Form** to the office as soon as possible prior to the date of withdrawal.



The withdrawal form is available on the school website at the link below:

<http://www.kist.ed.jp/node/5>

Nurse's Notes

Seasonal allergies

Seasonal allergic rhinitis is diagnosed at the age of around 4 to 6 years old as it usually develops after a few years of exposure to an external allergen. Symptoms include sneezing; stuffy or runny nose; cough and scratchy throat due to mucus running down the back of the nose to the throat; and puffy, watery, itchy eyes, mouth or skin. It peaks in late childhood and adolescence, and then may improve during adulthood. To help minimize the symptoms, there are a number of steps you can take as follows:

1 Start taking medicines earlier in the year than you may think

Children with seasonal allergies should ideally start taking medicines at least two to three weeks before the beginning of the season (which depends on the specific allergy) and continue them through the end. If your child has allergies year-round, talk to your doctor about keeping the medicines going all year rather than waiting for symptoms to flare up.

Most allergy medicines are far more effective at preventing symptoms than treating them once they start. This is because symptoms of allergies result from a whole cascade of events in the immune system, and once it gets going it's hard to stop.

Corticosteroid nose sprays are the most effective type of medicines for allergies (for children 2 and older); they prevent the cascade by decreasing the immune system's response to antigens like dust mites and pollen. Antihistamines can help relieve symptoms including sneezing and itchy eyes during an attack, but they are even more effective if they're in the bloodstream before the attack starts.

2 Check pollen counts

To find out types of pollen that cause your child's allergies, doctors can perform skin and/or blood tests. Then you can monitor pollen counts to know when to start medicines and when to limit your child's outdoor activities on the worst days.

As a general rule, trees pollinate in the spring, grasses bloom in mid- to late spring or early summer, and weeds in the late summer or early fall.

3 Winter has a big effect on allergies

Cold winter weather is a blessing for many children with seasonal allergies, as they can count on a break from symptoms until at least February. A warmer winter can cause plants to pollinate early, meaning allergic symptoms start up sooner than usual on your child.



Other weather clues that may increase your child's worst symptoms include: warm, windy days generally lead to a high pollen count, whereas calm days can leave all that pollen on the ground rather than flying into your child's nose.

4 Children aged 5 and older can try a new treatment

Immunotherapy or AIT (allergy shots) are usually given one or two times every week or month for three to five years and act much like a vaccine, offering exposure to increasing levels of the substance you're allergic to so your immune system adapts and becomes less reactive.

Oral immunotherapy is also available for children who dislike shots. The tablets absorbed under the tongue contain an extract of grasses or ragweed. In order to benefit from the therapy, children need to be at least 5 years old and have a positive allergy test for allergen showing allergic symptoms. After the first dose, children must be observed for at least 30 minutes, and afterward should be prescribed an epinephrine auto-injector in case of emergency.

Stephanie Pae
School Nurse

Reference

David L. Hill, M.D., 5 things You Don't Know About Kid's Seasonal Allergies, Parents Magazine, Retrieved from: <http://www.parents.com/health/allergies/seasonal/things-you-didnt-know-about-kids-seasonal-allergies/>



University Guidance News

G12 university applications

Applications for fall 2017 enrollment to universities in the major countries including the UK and the USA have been open since September and will close at the end of December or in early January. Most of our current G12 students are completing and sending their applications during these regular application periods; however, some students have already sent applications in mid-October to UK universities (October 15 is the deadline for Oxford, Cambridge, and medical and veterinary courses at all universities), or in early November for some US universities (Early Decision/ Early Action), and one or two Japanese universities (e.g. Waseda University political science course). Good luck students!

Mrs Okude visits HKUST and NYU Abu Dhabi



HKUST's ocean view dorm buildings.

During the Silver Week break, I visited Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in Hong Kong for the HKUST Information Day for undergraduate admissions on Saturday,

September 24, the large annual event where thousands of high school students, parents and counselors from Hong Kong, mainland China and Asian countries come to explore HKUST by attending various seminars, talks, exhibitions and campus tours. HKUST is a young and innovative university in Hong Kong founded in 1991 as an international research university and is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. HKUST is ranked top in Asia and offers a wide range of interdisciplinary programs from engineering to humanities all taught in English. The university is located in a hillside and waterfront complex overlooking beautiful Clear Water Bay peninsula (see photos), about 30 minutes by car from central Hong Kong. It was a very busy day but I enjoyed meeting with a number of enthusiastic faculty members and students who are passionate about their research and innovations. Please see the link below for more information about HKUST:

<http://www.ust.hk/about-hkust/>

I also had a chance to visit New York University (NYU) Abu Dhabi campus in Abu Dhabi, UAE during my trip to Dubai at the end of October. NYU Abu Dhabi is a highly selective international research university opened in 2010 offering a wide range of disciplines in science and liberal arts. With generous funds from the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, currently about 1000 selected students with outstanding talents and international

minds from all over the world including freshman **Motoi** from the KIST Class of 2016 (see his report on page 24) are studying at its gorgeous,



The library at NYU Abu Dhabi.

recently completed campus on Saadiyat Island, a new district developed to create a center of culture, sports, leisure and residence in Abu Dhabi. Branch museums of the Louvre, Paris and the Guggenheim, NY as well as the Zayed National Museum will open soon near the campus. Most of its international students receive scholarships for full or partial coverage of their tuition and costs for the entire four years toward graduation. They can also study in other NYU campuses in NY, Shanghai or Paris for a semester or two if they wish without additional cost. Please find more information about this unique university at the link below:

<http://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/about.html>

Alumni talk by Soo Min (Class of 2010)

On November 21, KIST Alumnae, **Soo Min** (Class of 2010) visited KIST for the first time since graduating in 2010 and conducted an alumni talk for KIST secondary students during lunch time in the LMC. She graduated from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in May 2015 and commenced working at an IT company in Washington, D.C. from the summer of 2015. She has recently moved to the company's Singapore office and is currently working as a Regional Operation Manager. During her talk session, she shared memories of her days at KIST as an IB student and her experiences at U Penn and Sorbonne, Paris with a group of secondary students from G8 through G12.



She responded to questions from the students and provided advice on career and university planning. Thank you Soo Min and keep in touch!



Alumni talk in the LMC.

Mrs Keiko Okude

Career and University Guidance Counselor
Office hours: Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 10:00-17:00
keiko.okude@kist.ed.jp

Alumnus Report

Motoi is an alumnus of KIST's "Class of 2016." He is currently in his first year of the Bachelor of Science degree course at New York University Abu Dhabi in UAE, and is majoring in mathematics.

Hello! My name is Motoi. I hope you remember me from the Class of 2016. Six months have passed since I graduated KIST, and I cannot believe how drastically my life has changed.

In freshmen welcome week or what we call in Arabic: "Marhaba" Week, NYUAD welcomed me along with 313 students (surprisingly, the largest year group in the history of this university) with innumerable events from laundry workshops to campus tours to a luxurious banquet in Dubai under the tallest building in the world, Burj Khalifa. I had the opportunity to visit this school with other applicants back in February as a part of the admission process, so it was nice to see the campus and the city of Abu Dhabi again. Also, I saw some familiar faces but they seemed more relaxed. (Everyone was competitive and tensed up in February. I think I was too.)

During that first week, I engaged in typical freshmen conversation: "What's your name?"

Where are you from? What's your major?", and fortunately was able to get along with many people.

However, at the same time I felt mildly uncomfortable surrounded by highly accomplished freshmen students with rich backgrounds; math olympians, CEOs, and national athletes etc. There was so much diversity in such a small student body, and it somewhat reminded me of my beloved K. International School. It was obvious that learning became inevitable for me in this place where languages, religions, world views and personal endeavors collided.

I have now come to realize that this school has a very healthy environment: academically and socially. Students here seem to enjoy learning and they dedicate a lot of time to intellectual growth by engaging in many academic opportunities outside of classes and extra-curricular activities. Also, the students are extremely cooperative. I barely see negative competition in terms of academic reputation, and I



Motoi (front) with friends.

believe this is one reason why the NYUAD student body is an extremely tight community. But, what I love about this school is that people here, including students, professors, security guards and workers, are always smiling. There is a positive atmosphere wherever I go.

This environment keeps me motivated to delve more into my field of interests: mathematics, football and photography, and to explore other fields I could be interested in in the future. Currently, I not only play in the intercollegiate football team every morning, I participate in interactive media workshops on the weekend, watch theatre performances, and tour around the country with my roommates. In addition, the generous financial scholarship from the Sheik has given me the opportunity to reach out to the community outside of Abu Dhabi. For fall break, I visited Amsterdam with two of my friends. Seeing different living standards and absorbing the Dutch culture were deeply inspirational and were great learning experiences.

For the next three and a half years, I hope to venture into the world I have not yet seen and bond with people I have not yet met. But, more importantly, I hope I can stay happy and positive throughout my undergraduate life in my new home, New York University Abu Dhabi.

For now, I am on track.

Motoi
KIST Alumnus, "Class of 2016"

