

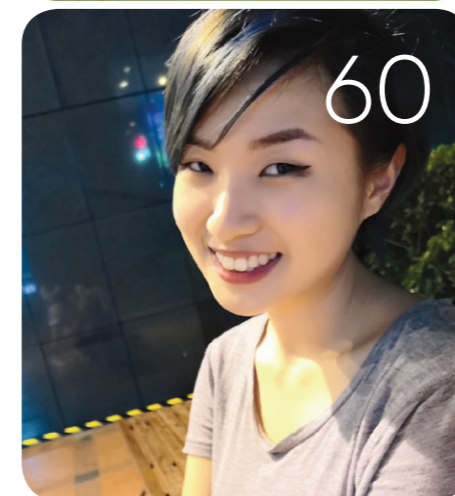
ignite

alumni magazine

SINCE 1981
AISG
American International School of Guangzhou

JUNE 2019
VOL.2





features

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Message from Dr. Carmody	02
Big Heart, Big Impact - Farewelling Dr. Carmody	04
Introducing New AISG Director: Kevin Baker	06
Highlights of 2018-2019	08
The Annual Fund Speaker Series	10
The Class of 2019	14

alumni spotlight

Tammy Hong, Class of 2014	20
Andrew Elliott, Class of 2016	22
Frances Chang, Class of 2012	24
Diane Hu, Class of 2011	26

departing faculty

Mark & Suzanne Elliott	30
Betty Lin	34
Jenny Su	38
Glenn & Karen Jacobsen	42
Simone & Nathan Lieschke	44
Jenny Ostermiller	46
Will & Laura Tragert	48
Duncan & Bernadette FitzGerald	50
Andrew Sinclair & Julie Lindsay	54
Other Departing Faculty in 2018-2019	56

rams around the world

#AISGalumni Around the World	58
Tips from Alumni	60
The Return of the Rams	62
Introducing the AISG Alumni Network	64
Our First Alumni Networking Night	66
A Throwback to the Past 30 Years	68
Alumni by the Numbers	72
We love being Rams!	74
Alumni Celebrations	76
Acknowledgements	77

MESSAGE FROM THE
director

DEAR FORMER RAMS,

Welcome to AISG's second edition of *Ignite*, our alumni magazine. After five years packed with learning and fun at the school, I am now approaching the realization that the well-loved phrase, "Once a RAM, always a RAM!" will soon be applying to me. I have absolutely loved my time at AISG. I can't believe how quickly five years have vanished. Like you, when you were in my shoes, I will be taking with me a host of very fond memories of the people within the AISG community and of the projects in which we've engaged over these years. While I'm looking forward to being part of the AISG alumni, and I know that I'll enjoy my next adventure, I also know that there is much I'm going to miss both at AISG and within Guangzhou.

The structure of our second edition of *Ignite* is significantly different from the first edition. I'm confident you'll enjoy exploring the pages to learn a little about the incoming Director, Kevin Baker, to view the many highlights of the last year, and to get to know the Class of 2019 and find out why we're so proud of their collective accomplishments. Throughout the year, we've continued expanding and connecting to more of our alumni community throughout the world.

There is much to bind us together... if you have been part of the AISG community, you are proudly considered alumni of AISG.

Over time, we plan to bring more AISG alumni together, expanding our worldwide alumni community. I'm looking forward to being part of the alumni of AISG. I look forward to remaining connected with you all, with AISG, and with Guangzhou.

There is much to bind us together. Regardless of whether you have been a student, parent, faculty member, or staff member, if you have been part of the AISG community, you are proudly considered alumni of AISG. Whether you were a RAM a year ago, 15 years ago, or 35 years ago, you're still part of our RAM alumni network. Whether you were part of the AISG Community for one year, five years, or more, you're an equally valued member of the group.

With that in mind, I'd like to extend special thanks to some RAMS who have been part of the fabric of our RAM Nation for significant periods of time. Some faculty members who have been teaching at AISG for over 10 years are heading for other adventures. Jenny Su has been part of the AISG Community for 19 years, Betty Lin for 17 years, Henry Hall for 14 years, Glenn and Karen Jacobsen for 11 years, and Nathan and Simone Lieschke also for 11 years.

Similarly, some of the graduating seniors have been students at AISG for 10 or more years. Agnes Lau and Javin Liu both started in pre-school and have spent an amazing 15 years at AISG; their entire school lives. A number of students have completed 13 years at AISG: Raven Hipolito, Maggie Ma, Sameer Samtani, Meenal Senthil and Minting Young. The following students have been with the school for 12 years: Yoon Seo Han, Zoe Li, Maria-Elena Little Endara. At 11 years are Vicky Jung and Ji Hyun Park. At 10 years are Andy Jeong, Tanya Khanna, Jee Su Kim, and Boon Yang Koh.

Relatedly, a number of students having completed a decade or more of their schooling at AISG are moving on from our RAM Nation. Ishita Agarwal will become alumni after 13 years and Richard Zhang after 12 years. After 11 years as RAMS we're saying goodbye to Emilia Liu, Ben Huang, and Catherine Hall. Akshat Agarwal is a decennial RAM.

To all of our longstanding RAMS, thank you for your long-term contributions to our community, and for your support of the school as it has changed and grown over time.

As always, we hope that we can keep connecting with even more people who have called the AISG community "home" at some point in their lives, and are eager to learn of the aspirations, achievements, and contributions which our alumni have made since leaving AISG.

Enjoy reading this magazine and rekindling within yourself the spirit of the great RAM nation as you read!

Warmest regards,

BP Carmody

**Director and Chief RAM (2014-2019)
DR. BERNADETTE P. CARMODY**



1. 2018 Dr. Carmody presenting diplomas to the seniors at the High School Graduation. 2. 2017 Dr. Carmody at the Theater Opening Ceremony with guests. 3. 2018 Dr. Carmody at Orientation Day at Science Park Campus.

big heart, big impact

WHILE THE ENTIRE SCHOOL COMMUNITY IS SAD TO SEE OUR DIRECTOR DR. BERNADETTE CARMODY GO, WE'RE HAPPY AND GRATEFUL FOR ALL THAT SHE LEAVES BEHIND.

One thing is for sure – AISG will never be the same. The legacy Dr. Bernadette Carmody leaves in her stead will live on, from introducing the PLC framework to refreshing the master plan and of course bringing our brand new theater to life.

A key part of her term has been about building relationships in order to get projects off the ground, and she says AISG's connections with local authorities means the school now has a very different profile – which has been vital in both the theater development and master planning process. Dr. Carmody jokes that in her time here, she has seen more architects and engineers than educators (luckily she had plenty of practice in her 10 years at Shanghai American School, during which the campus gained a new library, swimming pool and auditorium)! So much so that her husband Arnt Wollum tracked down a course on construction management and sent her off to upskill.

How did this Australian (her) and Norwegian (him) come to cross paths? The couple first met in Sri Lanka and since then have traveled and taught together in a “tumble of places and adventures”. They've lived in Norway, Liberia, Venezuela, Shanghai and Bahrain – including a stint in Arnt's hometown of Stavanger, where Dr. Carmody had her first taste of teaching Elementary School, until, she says, “we both got tired of scratching ice off our windscreens and shovelling snow”.

“Then we played ‘whoever gets the first job, the other will follow’ – it's a fun game!” she recounts. Ultimately, a phone call offering a role in rural Venezuela came one morning while she was still asleep. Arnt, who answered the call, accepted on the spot on her behalf. “When she wakes up, I guarantee you she will say yes,” he recalls saying.

There's a Norwegian saying, “Everything does not go as we guess,” that aptly sums up their journey. Says Dr. Carmody, “We've never thought of our life as being unusual or exotic. It's just life.”

It can be a lonely lifestyle at times; however, it's clear they make a rock-solid team, with their different personalities perfectly complementing each other. She credits Arnt as being a great support in hundreds of ways. Their shared companionship is central to daily life; he helps her practice speeches, bounces around ideas, and ensures she leaves home on time with a packed lunch and umbrella!

Her supportive and nurturing approach brings out the best in people and has helped strengthen the strong sense of community at AISG. It's not hard to see she genuinely values and cares for those around her. “It's important for Bern that everyone feels comfortable sitting around her,” says Arnt. “It's not just at school, it's not a hat to take on and off. It's the way it is, 24 hours.”

Dr. Carmody says she has a daily responsibility to model this the best that she can. “In the Carmody family, we always say that nice people are nice all of the time, not just when they feel like it!”

Happiness is central to her philosophy, as research shows a positive and warm school environment is critical to promoting better learning. Building on her doctoral dissertation on organizational culture, she has created a caring, inclusive environment for teaching wherever she goes. Fostering a thriving culture at the faculty level then flows down to the student level. “Learning only happens when students feel safe, valued and cared for,” she explains. “If everyone in the organization feels valued, encouraged and supported, they can be the best they can be. Energy can be generated, and the organization can move forward and adapt quickly, respond to demands and challenges and keep reinventing itself.”

While there was never dissatisfaction with the previous mission and vision as it was, she says the new plan will benefit the school for at least 10 years with greater relevance and connection to our foundational values.



1. 2015 Dr. Carmody and her husband Arnt Wollum dancing at the AmCham Ball. 2. 2019 Chinese New Year Celebration with parent volunteers. 3. 2019 Dr. Carmody and Middle School Principal Rick Bunnell volunteering their time to sell lucky draw tickets on International Day. 4. 2019 Dr. Carmody at the Annual Fund Celebration with an AISG parent 5. 2018 Chinese New Year Celebration with parent performers.

“It was quite the undertaking! The joy was the different pieces of the community, the different ways they contributed to the process.”

The process itself was highly robust and research-based, beginning with a methodical gathering of information leading to a search for patterns and priorities to shape a new vision. Often, groups gathered at her house to work on the project. “Many evening meetings were held at our place under the lure of sausages on the BBQ,” she laughs.

Many AISG faculty and staff have had the pleasure of enjoying Arnt's cooking at their home – an apartment in the Gold Arch compound on Er Sha Island facing Canton Tower. While they're excited to head to the Netherlands for a new challenge, they will miss the magical views, the security guards who greet them each morning, their ayi Jane (aka guardian angel & fairy godmother) and driver Mr. Lin! Not to mention the amazing dim sum and foot massages that abound in Guangzhou, a place they've called home for five years now.

Dr. Carmody's new role will be as Director and Chief Executive Officer at the International School of

Amsterdam, the first IB continuum school with a strong 53-year history. It's an area exploding with expat families, she says, and will be a very different learning environment, not to mention lifestyle. They'll be moving to a large, beautiful house with a lake across the road and a little canal running down the back, just five miles down the road from the school. Clipping hedges, mowing lawns and buying a car for the first time in 30 years ... big changes are in store!

“Each different living and working context provides enormous opportunity for growth and development,” Dr. Carmody says. Unsurprisingly, she has mixed feelings about leaving AISG, praising the meaningful projects and amazing people that marked her time here.

“It's the lure of new learning rather than a desire to cut ties here that was the motivator for us to move,” she says.

“Each school develops over time, with its own set of circumstances, organically meeting the needs of the community around it, as AISG has done.

“I could be very happy continuing the wonderful projects here ... they feel very much mine still!” ■



INTRODUCING KEVIN BAKER, AND a vision for the future

WE'RE EXCITED TO WELCOME OUR NEW DIRECTOR, WHO BRINGS OVER 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION TO AISG AND JOINS US FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BUSAN.

Although he's spent the past 25 years in Asia, this will be Kevin Baker's first time living in Guangzhou, and he's looking forward to a lot. Experiencing the food culture for starters, maybe picking up some Mandarin ... and getting his grill on! A fan of craft beer and college football, bourbon and barbecue, the latter is one thing he's been missing in Korea and is eager to pick up again.

Plus, of course, he's joining a school with a "big heart" where students are always at the center of what's going on. One of his tenets is that students don't care what you know until they know that you care.

"The most important thing that happens at any school is the interaction between teacher and student. That is the center of our business; that needs to be the very best that it can be," he says.

A self-professed "Renaissance teacher", Baker has taught many subjects, from physical education (kinesiology) to psychology to English literature. As a parent (his four children have been through international schools) and an educator (at all levels from guidance counselor to department head, dean to principal), he brings a rich breadth of experience to the table. His wife Dee, whose background is in retail sales management, has brought her skills to the schooling world, founding an international school shop in Korea, along with helping four other schools open their own stores. Two of their four offspring are now international educators, with the others being a graphic designer and US Marine. He's looking forward to promoting and strengthening the reputation of AISG and getting involved in events and initiatives - don't be surprised if you find him delving into anything from advising on universities to coaching the debate team!

Baker is passionate about community and is keen to learn what the AISG community believes is important when it comes to future-ready education. Acknowledging that "the future is going to be changing and evolving so quickly that we need to not have too static of a definition", he says this will involve continuous dialogue and evolution.

"The more the community comes together around the shared purposes of the school, the more effective a school is."

That's likely to mean less focus on content and more focus on fostering adaptability and flexibility, equipping our students to be "lifelong learners". "Think of school as more than just a building; as a concept rather than a place. Even though technology has transformed the world of work, education hasn't really changed over the last 150 years." According to Baker, we can't keep up on knowledge alone and our future leaders will have to solve problems we never thought we'd have to face.

"We need our students to be able to thrive in that future. Part of that is having a growth mindset. Part of it is understanding the importance of positive struggle - because we won't get the answers right away - to know the value of failure."

"Students need to be active participants and all learning must be relevant to their lives," he says.

"I believe we foster a positive attitude towards learning by encouraging students to ask challenging questions, to reflect critically, to develop research and inquiry skills, and to learn how to learn. We must encourage community service, a personal passion for sustainability, and activity beyond the classroom, because there is more to learning than academic studies alone."

He believes it's an exciting time to be teaching in China, and that AISG students, many of whom will become leaders in their chosen fields, will be uniquely positioned as a result. "What a joy it is that they will have such a rich knowledge of China and its culture."

Baker, who would have loved the opportunity to study at an IB school himself, says education in this part of the world is leading the way in innovation. He believes AISG is in a unique position to step up and lead in the area of soft skills, nurturing social and emotional learning.

"We have a chance to show an approach that really can have a significant difference in the world - to a place that has seen education only as a transactional experience, we're providing a transformational experience," Baker says.

Parents can expect him to be authentic and caring, firm yet fair - and inclusive at every step.

"We cannot forget we have a significant responsibility to educate parents about education - what we do, why we do it, how we do it, why it's different and will continue to be even more different in the future," he says. "We can't leave parents behind...otherwise you're going to reach the summit, and no one's going to be with you to celebrate!"

"Educators are personal forces in the lives of the students for which they are responsible," he says, "and a top priority is modeling attitudes and behaviors to lead by example."

"I believe it is critical for leaders to be visible and accessible to those they lead. Being visible and present generates confidence and connectedness," he says.

Baker also sees a key part of his job as being the "periscope of the organization" - looking ahead to see what's on the horizon and channeling this back internally.

However, his passion will always lie with helping young people on their journey of discovery and learning. "First and foremost, I think of myself as a teacher. I will forever be drawn to that 'aha' moment where you inspire a child ... and that's really what education is about." ■

Kevin Baker's Educational Philosophy

I BELIEVE:

- Students are to be at the center of all that we do.
- Every individual has immeasurable intrinsic value.
- Students do not care what you know until they know that you care.
- Students should be equipped with deep understanding, the skills to learn how to learn and the empowerment to act.
- There is power in visibility, presence, positivity and inclusiveness.
- Joy and Fun are critical elements in learning, work and service.
- Student achievement is the shared collective responsibility of the entire community.
- We are to be unified and respectful in our diversity.
- We are all to give back through service and pay it forward through sustainable practices.
- We are called to build a purposeful 'with and for' community.
- In the core values of integrity, responsibility, loyalty, courage and the challenge of good hard work.



The Baker family: Kevin, Dee and their children.



five highlights

OF 2018-2019

1. ANNUAL FUND LAUNCHED

This year, AISG launched the Annual Fund, which enables our community members to have an even more vibrant experience as a Ram. Donations are used to fund our Speaker Series, which brings fascinating people with captivating stories to our school. Each of the speakers is carefully selected to inspire, enlighten and touch the lives of our students, parents, faculty and staff.

2. NEW CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

We officially announced some exciting plans for a new campus redevelopment project that will transform both Er Sha and Science Park campuses into world-class learning environments. The project will see Grade three to five students relocated from Er Sha to Science Park and turn the Er Sha campus into an early learning center. Our Science Park campus will host Grades 3 –12 in inspiring educational facilities that support our mission to nurture future-ready individuals to aspire, achieve, and contribute. Construction is scheduled to begin in summer 2019.

3. A MUCH-ANTICIPATED BAZAAR

We all know that the PTA Holiday Bazaar is one of AISG's top traditions. This year's Holiday Bazaar was a blast and became one of our most successful PTA events to date! There were 101 local vendors and student groups who set up booths, offering everything from automatic pepper grinders to street tacos to fun games that funded student community service organizations. We had over 2,000 attendees and sold 2,500 lucky draw tickets! In total, our PTA raised RMB129,591 to support AISG's student learning program.

4. NEW DIRECTOR SELECTED

We're thrilled to announce that Kevin Baker will be the new Director of AISG, effective July 1, 2019. The Board devoted a tremendous amount of time to conducting an extensive global search, which began back in November 2017. Kevin joins us from the International School of Busan, where he was Head of School. Kevin has lived in Asia for more than 25 years and is experienced in international education. We are confident that his experience as a director, his academic expertise, and his enthusiasm for AISG will help us on our journey to becoming a leader in dynamic, compassionate and connected learning.

5. NEW AISG WEBSITE AND PORTAL

We kicked off the school year with a completely new online experience for current and prospective families. Our new look website is fully responsive across devices, with spruced-up content to match. We also redesigned Ramsnet, the portal for AISG parents, students and employees, which was 10 years old! The brand-new Ramsnet is home to everything from school-wide announcements and divisional reminders to school policies and rules. Check out our new site at www.aisgz.org.

annual fund speaker series

The AISG Speaker Series is funded entirely by the Annual Fund. Various Speaker Sessions bring fascinating people into our school to inspire, enlighten, and transform learning for our students. Speakers are invited to AISG from all over the world, and, through sharing their captivating stories, touch the minds and hearts of the members of our AISG community.



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4



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1. DR. GENE AITKEN AND JAZZ MUSICIANS, JAZZ CLINIC - OCTOBER, 2018

Grammy-nominated Dr. Gene Aitken is considered one of the most exciting and energetic jazz clinicians today, and is recognized as a visionary in both jazz education and computer technology. As a part of our Visiting Guest Program, AISG Middle and High School students had the incredible opportunity to work with the talented and inspiring musicians of Jazz Education Abroad and Dr. Aitken during the AISG International Jazz Education Festival. AISG students enjoyed jam-packed days of creative workshops, practices and performances.

2. DEAN LEA, TECHNICAL THEATER - OCTOBER, 2018

Dean Lea, the Technology Coach at Hong Kong International School, has worked in the entertainment and education industries for over 30 years. He has experience as a studio engineer, boom operator, sound recordist, as well as a lighting designer/operator within a variety of studio and location environments. He visited AISG as part of the Speaker Series to coach students on theatrical sound and lighting design and control for drama, musical and concert performances.

3. SHAN YING, TAI CHI MASTER PRESENTATION- NOVEMBER, 2018

Master Shan Ying, Tai Chi Master and Head Coach of Ruoshi Taichi Studio, performed in our Science Park Campus Theater. He helped the AISG community to understand what Tai Chi is and talked us through the different philosophical thoughts behind the art, helping both our students and parents find balance in their lives.

4. TONG TONG, TEA CEREMONY - JANUARY, 2019

Tong Tong is the National Senior Tea Artist Deputy Secretary-General of Guangdong Incense Culture Association and Champion of the sixth Session of Top 10 National Incense Artist Tea Ceremony. Tong Tong worked with our Middle and High School students to highlight the importance of tea in Chinese culture. Students took part in a tea ceremony, learning about all aspects of this elegant art. Parents, faculty, and staff were also invited to attend and learn about this beautiful aspect of Chinese culture.

5. VINCENT WARREN, DRAMA WORKSHOPS - JANUARY, 2019

Vincent Warren is a professional theater director, actor, and education practitioner with over 20 years of industry experience. Vincent came to AISG with Starlit Theater Group, a diverse group of highly experienced practitioners with backgrounds in professional theater, television, film and education. Starlit Theater Group is connected by a shared drive, a wealth of expertise, and a passion to inspire and engage creative imaginations at every level. Vincent and the team returned as a part of our Speaker Series to deliver drama workshops based on scripts from Romeo and Juliet.

6. CARL ANDERSON, WRITING WORKSHOPS - JANUARY, 2019

Carl Anderson is one of America's leading experts on teaching writing to students and has authored many books on the subject. Carl worked alongside teachers and students as they explored one-on-one writing conferences, strategies for improving their writing, and developing the ability to critique their own work.

7. INE BAETENS, KEYNOTE SPEECH - FEBRUARY, 2019

Ine Baetens is currently the Coordinator of the Flanders (Belgium) Government domestic and international sustainable development policy and has worked with the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and attended the Rio +20 Summit negotiating sustainable development goals, as well as participating in the Members of the Council of 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development (OECD). As part of the Speaker Series, she was able to make an impact on our Middle and High School Rams as she shared her passion for changing the future and creating a sustainable world.

8. SCOTT JONES, MUSIC WORKSHOPS - FEBRUARY, 2019

With a PhD in Music from the University of Minnesota, Associate Professor Scott Jones is an ardent supporter of the composers of today and has commissioned more than 30 new compositions from a range of renowned composers. We were very excited to have Scott come and work with AISG students to hone their musical craft.

9. KENDALL ZOLLER, PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATION WORKSHOPS - MARCH, 2019

AISG was visited by the incredible Kendall Zoller from Thinking Collaboratively, who has spoken at the campuses of Harvard, UC Berkeley, St. Anselm College, Boston University, University of Chicago, and Loyola University Maryland. Kendall has a PhD in Educational Leadership and a Master's in Educational Management. Kendall worked with students, parents, faculty and staff for the week to help them sharpen up their presentation skills and communicative intelligence.

10. MATT GLOVER, WRITING WORKSHOPS - APRIL, 2019

Matt Glover is a full-time educational consultant and co-author of "I Am Reading". A nationally renowned literacy consultant, Matt is a frequent presenter at conferences and in school districts on topics related to nurturing writers and supporting children's intellectual growth and development. Through our Speaker Series, Matt worked with our Elementary students to improve their writing, making a sometimes daunting task both fun and exciting.

11. MO SHOARAN, CAPOEIRA ART CLASSES - APRIL & MAY, 2019

Mo Shoaran has spent the past 16 years studying Capoeira (dance, body movement and development) alongside child education and theory. His personal interest in Capoeira has found him studying this art form of movement around the world, from Brazil to the UK then Europe and Asia. He visited AISG and created an increased playfulness amongst our Elementary students and helped them build tolerance through play which significantly increases their physical development and gives them inner strength.



class of 2019

THE AISG ALUMNI NETWORK WELCOMES OUR CLASS OF 2019.

Congratulations Class of 2019! We are proud of your journey so far and can't wait to see where life takes you in the future. Your academic, athletic, and artistic achievements this year were inspiring. We look forward to supporting you through mentoring, networking, class reunions, and providing any information you need to successfully transition into the next chapter in your lives. Once a Ram, always a Ram!



66 STUDENTS

Students studied at AISG for 10+ years: **16**

12 nationalities

university acceptances **100+**
(RECEIVED BY MAY 3, 2019)



next steps

FOR THE CLASS OF 2019

Whether you are starting a new chapter at university, performing national service in your home country, or taking a gap year, we wish you all the best in whatever the future holds!

AISG is proud of our 66 graduates who have been accepted by over 100 universities around the world. Graduates from the Class of 2019 have been accepted to the following colleges and universities at the time of publication.

(Universities are listed in alphabetical order as of May 3rd, 2019)

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
AUBURN UNIVERSITY
BARNARD COLLEGE
BELMONT UNIVERSITY
BOSTON COLLEGE
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY-POMONA
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY-CHANNEL ISLANDS
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY-LONG BEACH
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY-NORTHRIDGE
CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY
CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
CLARK UNIVERSITY
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
DE LA SALLE COLLEGE OF SAINT BENILDE
DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
DREXEL UNIVERSITY

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
ECOLE HOTELIERE DE LAUSANNE
ESCP EUROPE BUSINESS SCHOOL IN PARIS
FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
KOREA ADVANCED INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY KAIST
LES ROCHES BLUCHE SWISS HOTEL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
MARIST COLLEGE
MCGILL UNIVERSITY
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
MONASH UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY AT RALEIGH
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY-MAIN CAMPUS
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY
PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY-MAIN CAMPUS
PRATT INSTITUTE - MAIN CAMPUS
PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-CAMDEN
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
SWISS BUSINESS SCHOOL IN ZURICH
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
THE NEW SCHOOL
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
THE UNIVERSITY OF TAMPA
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN
TUFTS UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-DAVIS
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-IRVINE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-MERCED
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-RIVERSIDE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SAN DIEGO
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SANTA BARBARA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-SANTA CRUZ
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
UNIVERSITY OF KENT
UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-AMHERST
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-BOSTON
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-ANN ARBOR
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAIN CAMPUS
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA-AIKEN
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA-MAIN CAMPUS
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON-SEATTLE CAMPUS
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST LOUIS
WHEATON COLLEGE
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
YORK UNIVERSITY



**alumni
spotlight**



I wholeheartedly believe in the combined potential of art and museums to shape the ways we perceive our present and our history.

1. Photo of Tammy Hong by Dana Cooke, *Maxwell Perspective*, Winter 2018. 2. *Live*, 2019, *The Silence is SO Freakin' Loud*, Diptych Part 1 of 2, by Tammy Hong 3. *Self-Portrait* 2016, *Awareness Series Part 3 of 3*, by Tammy Hong 4. *Still-Life (Copied after Felix Vallotton)* 2016, Masterwork copy, by Tammy Hong

TAMMY HONG CLASS OF '14

the art detective

CREATIVE SPIRIT TAMMY HONG ('14) IS BLENDING HER LOVE OF ART AND HISTORY TO CARVE OUT A NICHE FOR HERSELF.

Tammy Hong sees herself as a “memory historian” and an “art detective” – a storyteller who investigates how the past shapes the present and how the present shapes the way we perceive the past. As a triple major B.A. graduate in art history, studio art, and history at Syracuse University, she’s highly passionate about cultural diplomacy and its power to foster cross-cultural understanding.

“I wholeheartedly believe in the combined potential of art and museums to shape the ways we perceive our present and our history. I think properly accentuating works of art by drawing attention to the monumental stories these artifacts have to tell can foster a sense of empathy and curiosity in museum visitors that would then encourage the exchange of ideas and strengthen cross-cultural relations. My goal is to become the memory historian worthy enough to tell these stories.”

Her current job, as she describes it, involves combing through artifacts to piece together stories about art supply manufacturers that are yet to be told. As the Andrew W. Mellon Research Assistant in Modern Materials at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., Tammy spends her days exploring the intersection of conservation science and art history, cataloging and researching artist materials housed in the Conservation Division.

“As an art historian and practicing artist, I enjoy analyzing works of art and artifacts through the perspective of its creator by focusing on the materiality and the application of a variety of mediums. Through my job, I am able to further investigate the relationships between artists and their medium,” she says.

Tammy is quickly making a name for herself in the art world; she recently made a splash with research on an 18th century Chinese tea album, highlighting elements of Chinese culture in the images that were often missing from Western scholarship on early

Chinese-export art. She has also been a researcher, curatorial intern and guest curator at Syracuse University Art Galleries; worked in museums in New York, Italy and China; and even participated in the painting of a fresco in Florence. Studying abroad in Florence in spring 2017 was a defining experience of which she’s particularly proud. Tammy says as a shy person, this took her well beyond her comfort zone.

“I was originally supposed to be an intern at Santa Croce, where I would have done what I was most comfortable doing – sitting behind a desk and conducting research. As luck would have it, I ended up in the Duomo, where the acclaimed Renaissance artists Filippo Brunelleschi and Lorenzo Ghiberti had left their mark. It was this job as a tour guide at the Museo dell’Opera del Duomo where I became more and more engaged with the idea of storytelling,” she says.

“The uncertainty and fear that I initially felt as a tour guide gradually disappeared. As the semester went by, the history of Florence became a part of my personal narrative. When I was given the honor to craft an entire tour, my own experience living abroad became interwoven with my research on Renaissance artistic and cultural traditions.”

A keen athlete during her 10 years at AISG, Tammy says basketball taught her the importance of hard work, perseverance and determination. “This ‘athlete mentality’ is something that I still apply to my everyday life and is also what forms the core of not only my work ethic, but also who I am as a person.”

That discipline and fearlessness played a huge part in Tammy being named a 2018 Seinfeld Scholar (an award for those who have made outstanding contributions to the beauty of the world) at Syracuse. Her advisor Romita Ray, associate professor of art history, praised Tammy as a talented artist who thinks like a forensic scientist; no doubt even bigger things lie ahead for this rising star! ■

ANDREW ELLIOTT CLASS OF '16

globetrotting for good

GRADUATE ANDREW ELLIOTT ('16) REFLECTS ON AN UNFORGETTABLE SUMMER, THANKS TO A LIFE-CHANGING FELLOWSHIP FOR YOUNG LEADERS.

Living abroad can be a transformative experience. Andrew Elliott has experienced this first-hand, time and time again. From Kenya to Romania, Brazil to Germany, Latvia to China, and most recently Milan, Italy, he has befriended people all over the globe and learned something new from each of them.

A challenging stint in Ghana last summer with the Bright Generation Community Foundation was particularly meaningful, and the former AISG student says the trip broadened his perspective in many ways.

Andrew was selected to travel to Kumasi, Ghana, through the nine-month Global Fellows Leadership Program, which recruits outstanding students to intern all over the world in order to foster global citizenship. His internship was with the Ghana Bamboo Bikes Initiative, which produces and sells environmentally friendly bicycles all around the world and is currently developing affordable bamboo wheelchairs. Its mission – providing alternative transport and creating jobs through sustainable use of natural resources – perfectly embodies the fellowship's values of conscience and service. The combination of empowering a local women-led business, paired with a healthy dose of environmental innovation, appealed to Andrew.

He collaborated with CEO Bernice Dapaah (a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum and alumni of Harvard University's Executive Education Program) to connect the foundation with Chinese suppliers to evaluate future ventures, along with appraising and administering zero-interest loans.

"I was drawn to this program because I am interested in the impact that zero-interest loans

can have on developing communities, and there was an opportunity to provide loans raised by a class at Santa Clara to local chili farmers to expand their farms," Andrew, who's now in his third year at Santa Clara University, explains.

No two days were the same, which kept things interesting. "I spent a lot of time researching fundraising opportunities for the NGO in the form of grants and crowdfunding. I was also involved in searching for a new profit-making initiative to support the altruistic side of the business," he says. "On some days I would go with people in the office to run errands around Kumasi to see the city and get a better feel for life in Ghana."

One of the most rewarding parts? Giving away shoes at a community school an hour's drive out of the city.

"We went to a local school with 400 shoes donated by the TOMS shoe company, and we went class to class putting shoes on kids. It was a really moving experience to be able to be a part of that and one that I won't forget," Andrew recalls.

Due to the language barriers and different cultural norms, it took some time before he was able to get around independently. "Luckily, we had great help from people at the office who took us all around Kumasi and looked after us very well."

However, one thing quickly became apparent to Andrew – the effects of globalization. He notes that even in Ghana, the influence of China was undeniable; as in some ways China looks to the US, so does Ghana to China. "All over Ghana we saw Chinese signs and businesses, new streets built with Chinese money and Chinese businessmen at

We went class to class putting shoes on kids. It was a really moving experience to be able to be a part of that.



1. Andrew Elliott. 2. Andrew interning in Ghana. 3. Andrew and classmate, Alec Gonzales, working with children in Ghana.

the airport. At work, we dealt with Chinese suppliers to find opportunities to buy bamboo clamshell food boxes and had to download and use Chinese apps and services to do so," he observes.

Currently a finance major with minors in economics and data analytics, Andrew is keenly interested in the combined power of data and business to make better decisions for our society and environment.

"It's a really exciting time to be in the Silicon Valley, and I have really enjoyed being around the innovation and forward thinking that it breeds."

He credits his time at AISG for giving him a solid base to build upon at college. "I didn't feel like any field was too difficult to try, because AISG showed me that I could achieve whatever I put my mind to." ■

FRANCES CHANG CLASS OF '12

striking a balance

A QUICK CHAT WITH FRANCES CHANG ('12) ABOUT EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY, AND BALANCING IT ALL WITH HER CREATIVE OUTLET - MUSIC.

These days, Frances Chang has a full plate to juggle, but she wouldn't have it any other way! She credits an AISG class for igniting her passion for psychology, which eventually led her to Harvard - and now, a local initiative in Washington, D.C., supporting underprivileged families with young kids.

It's not surprising that she has gravitated towards working with children. Frances, who has been singing since Elementary School and participated in various choruses, musicals, and a cappella groups, has also served as a children's music teacher for years. We caught up with her to see what she's been up to lately!

Tell us a bit about your life after AISG.

After AISG, I attended Wheaton College (MA) for a year and a half, then transferred to Brandeis University. I started out majoring in Music Performance at Wheaton, but decided to change to Psychology when I was at Brandeis. While I was at Brandeis, I studied abroad in Kyoto, Japan, for a semester.

After receiving my Bachelor's degree, I worked for a year in research and early childhood education, then completed my Masters in Human Development and Psychology at Harvard Graduate School

1. For me, singing is a form of self-care and stress relief.

of Education. Currently, I am working at the Early Childhood Innovation Network as a Research Specialist.

What does that involve?

The Early Childhood Innovation Network, aims to promote resilience in families and children from birth to five years old in Washington, D.C. Currently, I am working on a few different projects. The main project that I am working on is a collaboration with the DC Department of Health to support low-income families in navigating health, developmental and social services in their communities. We develop, implement and evaluate programs for families with young children. Additionally, I am also involved in other projects that support early childhood educators' well-being.

What drew you to this field?

I've always been interested in the human mind, psychopathology, and helping people. In my IB Psychology class with Mr. O'Hara, I learned the basics and fundamental theories. Outside of class, I volunteered for Helping Hands and had the opportunity to interact with community members who had developmental and learning disabilities. Little did I know, these experiences were setting me up for the career I have now.

In college, I worked in different clinical and developmental psychology laboratories to gain research skills. For instance, I was able to work with different personnel (psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, etc.) in various hospitals and universities. In addition to research, I also taught young children music at a preschool and Gymboree Play and Music. Through my work in both research and education, I found myself wanting to provide

more support for children's development and well-being.

How did AISG prepare you for college and work?

AISG definitely provided me with a great foundation. As much as students complained about the rigor and intensity of the IB curriculum, it did help me think more critically and realize my learning style. Interpersonally, AISG gave me opportunities to practice skills such as leadership, collaboration, conflict management and communication.

What advice would you give to AISG students who are considering pursuing the same path?

The field of psychology is quite broad. There are many different tracks (clinical, developmental, social, industrial, organizational, etc.) and paths (research, education, clinical, policy, etc.) you can take. Be open and flexible. Explore different areas and roles by taking classes, connecting with people from the field, and/or doing internships.

A lot of us still remember your performance at the 30th anniversary gala in 2012 - do you still sing?

I am still very much involved in singing and performing. In college, I participated in a cappella groups and performed at campus events. Now, I continue to share my music by recording covers and performing at local events. Singing is my way of balancing life.

For me, singing is a form of self-care and stress relief. It was more difficult to juggle everything I needed to do and sing when I was a student, but nowadays, as a working professional, I have more control over how I want to schedule my off time! Feel free to follow my music on Instagram: @franphran! ■



1. Frances Chang. 2. Frances (4th to the right, back row) at a Let's Talk conference at Harvard Graduate School of Education. 3. Former teacher Crystal Chu, Frances and her classmates in Helping Hands community service group at AISG.

DIANE HU CLASS OF '11

flying free

GOING FROM A LARGE CITY TO A SMALL COLLEGE TOWN WAS A BIG CHANGE, BUT DIANE HU ('11) IS THRIVING STATE-SIDE.

Dedication and determination are just a few things Diane Hu picked up at AISG - qualities that fuel her quest to make a difference. After heading off to college and getting involved with political campaigns and student associations, she's now keenly aware of the importance of women and minorities in the public sector.

Originally from Seattle, Washington, Diane attended AISG for three years, when work brought her family to China. Since then, she has studied public policy at Princeton and law at Columbia, and is currently a law clerk to a federal judge at the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York before she returns to work at a law firm.

What do you miss most about Guangzhou?

I miss the liberating big city feel of it and how there's always some place to go or something to do. The thing I love about Guangzhou is there are so many restaurants and places that aren't always the most noticeable, but actually have great food or are really fun.

Why Princeton?

I'd always heard Princeton is a cross between a large research institution/university and a small liberal arts college. I'm in a 300-person lecture as well as a 3-person precept (discussion class). It doesn't have a business, law, or medical school, so the amazing professors give undergrads a lot of attention here. My sister went to Princeton, and when I went there for her graduation, the alumni parade was unbelievably spirited; it was just so apparent that all these people loved their time

at Princeton and wanted to donate and come back every year for reunions. One could sense their devotion and loyalty to the school, and I wanted to be a part of that, too!

What are some of the biggest differences between life in Guangzhou and life in Princeton?

I'd say the biggest difference would be the independence and freedom to make my own decisions. While at first it felt liberating, it was strange sometimes to just do what I felt was right at the time, because I was always used to consulting my parents or teachers.

If you could go back in time to High School and give some advice to yourself, what would it be?

Make the most of the time I had left and not mentally check out so soon. I couldn't wait to just graduate and leave when I was a senior, and nearly everyone in my class was of the same mindset. I'd justify not joining a club that always sounded really interesting and worthwhile by saying, "It's my senior year, I already have enough going on."

Any advice for teachers at AISG to help them prepare students here now to be successful in college?

All the teachers I had did a great job, but one of the best methods was leaving most of the responsibility to students. One of my teachers said, "It makes no difference to me whether or not you do the readings - you're only hurting yourself if you don't." Another taught the class like an actual college course, with little to no homework

I received a great education my whole life, and I wish everyone could be that fortunate, too.

assignments. I remember thinking, "Hey this is going to be so easy", but the tests ended up being the most difficult things ever. From those challenging experiences, I learned to do things on my own, which prepared me well for college, where there aren't going to be angry parents and teachers if you stay out all night and miss a class.

What is your favorite memory of your time at AISG?

My favorite memory is definitely my time in the High School musical, from the nerve-wracking auditions and hilarious rehearsals to the actual performances. It was always so much fun getting to know others in the cast better and seeing the whole production come together over the three months. You know you love something when you're eager to wake up early on a Saturday morning to go to rehearsal.

If you could do something to change the world for the better, what would it be?

Change education worldwide. It's definitely a kind of utopian best-case scenario, but I would make it accessible to everyone because I think the right kind of education eliminates almost everything that is the root of all problems right now, from discrimination and misconceptions of other cultures to violence and poverty. Education also leads to new advancements in technology, which could also help with the environment. I also think it's really unfair that there are many people of all ages and backgrounds who want to better themselves through more education but can't because they don't have access or the resources. I received a great education my whole life, and I wish everyone could be that fortunate too. ■



1. Diane Hu. 2. Diane getting ready to perform in the High School Musical at AISG. 3. Diane at Princeton University.



departing
faculty

YEARS AT AISG: 2010-2019

mark & suzanne the elliotts:

THE SHERIFF IS LEAVING TOWN

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES, MARK ELLIOTT, AND WIFE SUZANNE, A FORMER AISG EAL TEACHER, ARE HEADING TO THE U.S. HERE THEY DISCUSS THEIR MOVE, RAISING THEIR TWO CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD (SON ANDREW, CLASS OF '16, DAUGHTER SOPHIE, CLASS OF '19), AND OFFER SOME FINAL ADVICE TO STUDENTS AND ALUMNI.

After nine years at AISG, Mark and Suzanne are heading to the U.S., where Mark was born. As the couple have lived on four different continents over the last 30 years, Mark admits he is struggling to call this a move 'back home'. Unlike his mom, who has been asking when he's coming home from the day he left in 1989, she finally has her wish. "It's where we need to be, and where we want to be," says Mark.

That doesn't mean they won't miss Guangzhou. "This city has become very beautiful. It's one of the few cities where you can see it grow, the architecture, the flowers. It's mindblowing how it changes overnight – when the sun shines and everything is blue, it's just "wow," says Suzanne.

Back in the late 1980s, Mark's aunt suggested he should follow in her footsteps by working overseas. The idea appealed to Mark, and he started applying for jobs. Neither realised this decision would lead to Mark meeting and marrying Suzanne, a native Brazilian, or to their two children, Andrew and Sophie, being born in Africa and Latin America.

Mark's first post was in São Paulo, Brazil, where his future wife was working at a rival school. "There was bad blood between our schools. There were a few fights after sporting events," he says. But fate intervened, and a 'get to know you' meeting between the two schools introduced him to Suzanne. The rest, as they say, is history – or as Suzanne puts it, "like Romeo and Juliet, except nobody got hurt!"

A Move to Kenya

Suzanne travelled extensively as a child and had a

yearning to explore more of the world as an adult. And so after three years in São Paulo, the couple set off to Kenya, one of Suzanne's favorite countries.

"It was a very different place to live. We had to deal with being without electricity seven or eight hours a day, but it was a great place. Our son was born there, the people are nice, it was a good place to be," says Suzanne.

But things were to change in 1998, when the US embassy in Nairobi was hit by terrorist bombs. "We knew people who were killed and everything changed. We didn't feel safe any more," says Suzanne. "We knew we had to leave, and so we did, child under one arm, bag under the other."

The family made the move to a small school in Romania, but remained on the lookout for something that would offer the opportunities they wanted for their two children. In 2010, they made the move to AISG.

Embracing the World

"AISG is our longest stay anywhere," says Suzanne. "Our kids have grown up and been educated here. That was a big thing for us, being at such a good school and the opportunities it provided for our kids. That was the reason we stayed."

Those two children are now finding their own way in the world – Andrew at Santa Clara University in the US, while Sophie is making her choice of where to study after graduating from AISG this summer. "They are both independent and they have all the courage in the world," says Suzanne. "That's partly because they have lived in a number of countries,

AISG is our longest stay anywhere. Our kids have grown up and been educated here. That was a big thing for us, being at such a good school and the opportunities it provided for our kids. That was the reason we stayed.





1. The Elliott family in 2010. 2. The Elliott family in 2019. 3. Mark and Suzanne at Andrew's graduation in 2016. 4. Sophie (2nd to the left, back row) at the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony in 2019.



5. Mark and Suzanne at the Guangzhou American Chamber of Commerce Ball in 2019. 6. Sophie's graduation in 2019. 7. Mark working the Guangzhou Youth Basketball League booth at the Holiday Bazaar in 2015. 8. Mark, Suzanne and Sophie at the 2019 APAC Award Night.



and partly because the school has prepared them well.

Andrew recently spent nine months in Kumasi, Ghana, on an internship with the Ghana Bamboo Bikes initiative. "He chose to do that off his own back. He slept on the floor, washed his clothes by hand, didn't complain," says Suzanne. "We did laugh when he said there was no electricity – well, guess what, you were born in a country with no electricity!" (see page 22 for more)

Meanwhile, as Director of Athletics and Activities at AISG, Mark has helped develop the co-curricular program. "When I arrived, we didn't have teams

in table tennis, badminton, volleyball, basketball, swimming or cross country. We do now. It helps give the kids more opportunities. They can try them all before they choose what they specialise in at High School."

Championship Wins

Mark's coaching has led to seven consecutive championship wins for the boys' Middle School basketball team. But he remains modest. "It's players who win or lose games," he says. "They play, coaches help. We've got some extremely good kids who are very hard working and have developed some real skills. I'm proud of that record, yes, but

the kids are the ones who accomplished it."

Suzanne, meanwhile, has taught kindergarten as well as 10th, 11th and 12th grade. Specialising in EAL at AISG, Suzanne even substituted as a music teacher. "Suzanne's a great teacher, she's a real master teacher, people should be watching her at work," says Mark proudly.

The bonds they formed with the children they taught over the years are a great reward. "It's so special when they write to tell you you're still important in their life," says Suzanne, who has one of her first pupils from her days in São Paulo and

her baby twins coming to visit soon. "At the end, you have given something to them that they give back to you. It's a real connection."

It goes without saying that leaving AISG will be a wrench. "I will miss the people, the campus, my little classroom – I love it here," says Suzanne. "I will miss it all."

And Mark's final advice to students and alumni? "Show up every day, give it your best effort, find something you love and work at it." Which might just be the advice the Elliotts themselves have lived by. ■

YEARS AT AISG: 2002-2019

betty lin:

THE GREATEST SHOWWOMAN

BETTY LIN, HEAD OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AT AISG, HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN HER STUDENTS' HEARTS, WHICH IS WHY THEY ORGANIZED A UNIQUE SEND-OFF AHEAD OF HER UPCOMING MOVE TO PERU.

"The kids organized a surprise at my last AISG concert," laughs Betty, as she describes the send-off she received from students. "They secretly learned a new piece and played it for me – it was the Greatest Showman, but they changed it to the Greatest Showwoman and gave me a top hat to wear while they played."

It was a fitting tribute for the multi-talented Betty, who for the last 17 years has been Head of Visual and Performing Arts at AISG. Things have certainly changed from the day Betty first stepped through the doors of the music department, charged initially with 'creating a band'. "The music department was really small in those days. They had no instrumental music at all," she says. "When we first moved to Er Sha, there wasn't even a stage!"

But Betty was a force to be reckoned with, moving the school on from a general music program to bands, symphonic orchestra, jazz ensembles, strings and choirs for middle and High School. "My job has always been exciting, because every year it has changed and grown," she says.

Amazing Transformation

Guangzhou has also changed over Betty's time here. "When I first came, there were still cows

grazing in the city. There was no western-style food. People would have to go to Hong Kong to buy food or watch movies. Now, it's so much more modern and has a completely different feel. I am really glad that I have been able to see that transformation, it's been phenomenal."

One constant almost from the day she arrived has been her cat, Snowy. Bought as a kitten when Betty first arrived, the two have been inseparable. So her move to Peru was understandably causing her consternation, as Snowy was too old to make the trip. Happily, the AISG community came through, and Snowy has now found a new home in Guangzhou with the mother of an AISG alumna.

Even with the Snowy issue addressed, Peru is a big move for the Australian, whose Hong Kong Chinese background and fluency in Cantonese helped her settle in Guangzhou. Not speaking Spanish will be her first challenge, but it's not one to daunt her. "I want to be able to master it, and I'm thinking being immersed in a Spanish-speaking culture will make me learn easier and faster. I'm looking forward to trying, anyway."

The move is not entirely a step in the dark – Betty already has several friends and former colleagues at her new school and has made visits there in the past. She is looking forward



The music department was really small in those days. They had no instrumental music at all. When we first moved to Er Sha, there wasn't even a stage!



1. Betty and student, Isaac Nie, in the strings class. 2. Betty and Adrienne Higley receiving awards at the 2019 APAC Awards Night. 3. Betty conducting at a High School concert in 2017. 4. Betty conducting the High School winter concert in 2018. 5. Betty teaching Middle Schoolers strings in 2011. 6. Betty at the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony in 2017. 7. Students surprising Betty with The Greatest Showwoman at the Middle and High School concert in 2019.



to sampling new foods and culture. "Peruvian cuisine is just excellent. I am looking forward to something so totally different. The variety is just immense. Very exciting."

Ms. Lin is Coming!

But for the moment, let's go back to that amazing send-off, organized by Betty's students. "Every time I walked past the music room, they were practising classroom music," says Betty. "Well, that's what I thought. But really they were surreptitiously practicing the Greatest Showman, and whenever I approached, a lookout would shout, 'Ms. Lin's coming!', and they'd quickly change the piece."

The effort was worth it, as the final concert piece was a total surprise, as was the photo slideshow the students had put together. "The whole thing was so sweet and so completely unexpected,"

says Betty. "One of the most touching things was when the kids and their parents gave me flowers while I was on the stage – it really felt like I was graduating from AISG. Look, I finally graduated – it only took me 17 years!"

So, just as she'll be taking her own spices to Peru to make sure she can recreate her favorite Chinese recipes, so she will take the memories of her students and her life here to her new home. "I will miss them a lot. It's hard to say goodbye. But it's not really goodbye. People will come and visit, kids keep in touch. I've got kids who have graduated now who have their own children, and I still keep in touch with them. That won't stop. That's one of the best things about being a teacher."

We tip our hats to you Betty – and we have no doubt the show will go on once you have settled into your new role in Peru! ■

YEARS AT AISG: 2000-2019

jenny su:

THE ALCHEMIST

AS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER JENNY SU RETIRES, SHE TELLS HOW A CONVERSATION 19 YEARS AGO BROUGHT HER TO A REWARDING NEW CAREER IN TEACHING.

In 1999, Jenny Su was working as a chemist for a company in Canada when her life changed. Her husband had accepted a job with a large firm in China, and the family relocated to Guangzhou. At first, with no job of her own, she was bored. "I had nothing to do, other than walk the kids to school and see them off," she explains.

But that school was AISG. And when a chat with (former School Director) Dr. David Shawver revealed her background as a chemistry major, he invited her to join the staff as a lab specialist. The move would awaken a passion she wasn't even aware she had: working with children. "I was working in the lab in Canada for I don't know how many years, but it was so different when the children came along," she says. "I just loved coming to work every day and seeing their faces. I found my passion here."

Jenny's first task at AISG was to source all the equipment she needed from Guangzhou, instead of relying on expensive imports. "At that time, everything was coming from the U.S., even sulphuric acid. It cost big money, as you had to pay import duties. So I localised everything, including the instruments, and worked in the High School lab teaching students chemistry experiments."

Three years later, Jenny made the move from Chemistry to Mandarin, starting with teaching High School and then IB – teaching the first student ever to gain an IB in Mandarin at AISG. She has since taught the language to all grades, from IB to kindergarten. "It's very hard to choose my favorite time, but if I had to, I'd say teaching Mandarin in

Elementary School wins out. I enjoyed it the most and for the longest time over the 19 years I've been here."

Rooftop Basketball

Having been at AISG for 19 years, Jenny has seen the place change considerably. When she joined in 2000, the only campus was the Greenery, home to just one small school building with four floors and a basketball court on the roof where students from grades 1 to 12 studied together.

"The swimming pool was in the residential area, and running class was held in one of the yards on the complex!" It may have been small-scale, but there was a real family feeling. "So many families were living in the complex, it made everything so easy. We'd often get together for BBQs on birthdays and other events."

A major advantage for Jenny was the fact that her own kids attended AISG. "AISG was good for them. It helped my boys grow up into two bright young men." Even though they have flown the nest, community ties have stayed with them. "When my elder boy married in New York, friends from AISG came from all over to the wedding. They were talking about when they were kids, playing basketball, eating my homemade spaghetti. Those memories were made in the Greenery."

A Passion for Dance

AISG didn't just open up Jenny's love of teaching. It

“Over 19 years, it's become my life. I've enjoyed working here, and I've looked forward every morning to coming here.”



also helped her share her other passion – dance. As she talks about one of her proudest moments, when children performed a traditional dance dressed as jasmine flowers, this passion comes alive.

"I designed the costumes, then went to Hui'an and bought the material. I gave my drawings to a professional tailor, and she made the costumes. It was the first time the children learned this kind of dance, and it was beautiful – it gave parents and teachers a passion for folk dance and an interest in Chinese culture."

Jenny has now put on dozens of dance shows, with parents as well as kids. "Parents don't have that many chances to dress up and show off, and so I decided to give them a chance, too, and everybody loved it!"

It doesn't sound like Jenny will be hanging up her dance shoes any time soon, even when she retires from AISG. So, what are her retirement plans? "I'm doing nothing, enjoying myself! I will register for a class to study some kind of dance, but other than that I am waiting for my husband to stop working so we can move back to Canada."

Although she is looking forward to her retirement, she will miss her friends and colleagues at school. "Over 19 years, it's become my life. I've enjoyed working here, and I've looked forward every morning to coming here."

However, Jenny admits she is looking forward to at least one new thing when she retires. "I think I will stay in bed until nine o'clock. I don't need to get up when the alarm wakes me any more!" ■



1. Jenny, Elementary School Principals, and Elementary School Mandarin teachers at the 2019 AISG Chinese New Year celebration. 2. Jenny at the 2018 WASC celebration event at Science Park Campus. 3. Jenny and former Middle School Principal Meagan Pavey on Twin Day. 4. Jenny and her student, Abigail Lieschke, in traditional Chinese dress at the 2018 AISG Chinese New Year celebration. 5. Jenny, former Elementary School Principal, Gary MacPhie, and former Elementary School Mandarin teachers. 6. Jenny dancing at the 2016 Chinese New Year celebration with parents and former Elementary School Principal Gary MacPhie. 7. Jenny and fellow teacher, Kitty, at the 2018 Elementary School Halloween Parade.





They have been challenged to become great students, to think globally, and they are comfortable with whoever they are with, no matter where they are from.

YEARS AT AISG: 2008-2019

glenn & karen the jacobsens:

THE CREATORS IN HARMONY

THE JACOBSENS ARRIVED IN GUANGZHOU IN 2008, WHEN SUBWAY WAS THE ONLY WESTERN FOOD OUTLET AND ER SHA WAS STILL WILD AND OVERGROWN. ELEVEN YEARS AND LOTS OF CHANGE LATER, IT'S TIME FOR KAREN, GLENN, AND THEIR CHILDREN, AALIYAH, JOSIAH AND ANGELICA TO RETURN TO CANADA.

It seems that Karen and Glenn Jacobsen are pretty good at taking life as it comes. "Glenn signed our first overseas teaching contract the day before we got

married," says Karen. "We told our families about it the day after. It was only supposed to be for a year, but it turned into 15!"



1. Glenn teaching Middle School Robotics.



2. Karen teaching Elementary School Art.

After a short time in Korea, the couple made the move to AISG, where they have both enjoyed diverse and challenging careers. For Glenn, that meant teaching math and science, both subjects he loves. As a sports lover, he also coached basketball and High School varsity girls volleyball.

He then moved into teaching eighth grade – "That really excited me because I love the energy that Middle School kids have" – while dabbling in tech and coding, before being asked to take on the new role of High School STEM and Robotics teacher.

Inspired by the skill on show from students in class, Glenn started an after-school robotics team, which quickly grew in size and expertise. "We started out with fewer than 20 kids. Then, incredibly, the next year it doubled, and the year after that it doubled again. We now have a very strong system where the older kids teach the younger ones, and everyone aims to be their best together. It's great to see them having fun and gaining a passion."

A Love of Art

Meanwhile, Karen started off as a classroom teacher, and then took time off when the couple's daughter, Angelica arrived. But her true love was art, and AISG gave her the opportunity to pursue her dream. "I had a fine art degree, but I didn't quite know how to use it. When a part-time art position came along, I applied and got the job, which gave me a great chance to be mentored by (former Elementary School Principal) Gary MacPhie, a wonderful growing opportunity."

Karen was inspired to introduce new programs, including the Makey Makey project, which she talked about at a 21st Century Learning Conference. "That was huge, and all stemmed from an inspiring idea I had that I could have kept to myself, but I was encouraged to say let's try and see what happens."

Karen's creativity and thoughtfulness are well-known around campus. She often writes haikus or bakes cakes for friends and colleagues. "I just like to bring joy to other people, and sometimes a light-hearted note or a baked treat put on their desk to say "Hey, you inspire me," really makes their day," she says.

From China to Canada

All three of the couple's children, Angelica, Josiah and Aaliyah, were raised in Guangzhou, and the family is clear on the positives that brought. "We really like the fact that our kids have had a great school to be at, with such a safe learning environment," says Glenn. "They have been challenged to become great students, to think globally, and they are comfortable with whoever they are with, no matter where they are from."

Now, after more than a decade in China, it's time for the family to make the move back to Canada. After so long, they are expecting their home country to feel a little strange at first. "We're going to try and learn how to be Canadian again," says Karen. "We haven't done that for a really long time, but hey, let's give it a try!"

It's no surprise they are all going to miss Guangzhou. "I'll miss the school, the church we go to, the warm winters, the Turkish food," says Glenn. "There are such good, close connections here, it's not always a given that you have a good group of people who get along as well as they do here."

And for Karen, it's the human connections she will miss most. "You have your family, the people that you came with, but AISG and the surrounding community has been like a bigger family for us all. I'm going to miss the beautiful friends, amazing colleagues and mentors we met here." ■

YEARS AT AISG: 2008-2019

simone & nathan the lieschkes:

THRIVING IN GUANGZHOU

SIMONE AND NATHAN LIESCHKE AND DAUGHTER ABIGAIL THRIVED DURING THEIR TIME AT AISG. AS THEY LEAVE FOR A NEW ADVENTURE IN SINGAPORE, THEY EXPLAIN HOW THEIR 11 YEARS HERE HELPED THE WHOLE FAMILY GROW.

"We didn't know how lucky we were," says Simone Lieschke, AISG's Elementary School Director of Curriculum and PYP Coordinator. "When we interviewed for AISG, it was a school we hadn't heard of, in this place we didn't know about, and we were just drawn to the people. And when we got here, we were so blown away because we really had found a gem."

Simone and her husband, Nathan, who is currently an Elementary School PE teacher, began their careers at AISG in 2008, teaching third and fourth grade respectively. When daughter Abigail came along in 2010, the couple were ready to make the move away from AISG. The school, however, wasn't going to let them go easily.

"We actually had new jobs lined up in Vietnam," says Simone. "But right at the last minute, the PE teacher here left, so Nathan took that position, and I took Nathan's position as fourth grade teacher." It suited them both – Nathan could indulge his love of being outside in the fresh air, teaching kids of different ages, while Simone could build her knowledge of the school, a foundation she would call on in her Director role in later years.

A Supportive Atmosphere

The couple found the supportive atmosphere at

AISG meant they were never bored. "The school is always growing and improving," says Simone. "There were always opportunities to try new roles, and I think the school supporting us kept us energized and committed to staying and doing more."

The connections they made with students were also an important part of their lives. "All the kids know us, and if they don't know my name, they'll say, 'Hi Mr. Nathan's wife' or 'Hi Abigail's mum'. I love the fact that they all wanted to say hello, even if they weren't quite sure of my name!" laughs Simone.

The decision to stay in China meant daughter Abigail has grown up thinking of the country as home. "It's all she's known," says Simone. "She'll say, Australia is my country, but China is my home. Being abroad, she's just seen so much more than kids back home, and she has this worldview that they don't have."

Like her parents, Abigail thrived at AISG. "The inquiry-based program is a big benefit," says Nathan. "She loves making and building and creating, that's her kind of passion, so this curriculum works really well for her." The program has also inspired Abigail to get involved in charity events, recently donating her hair to an organization that supports people with hair loss, including cancer survivors.

Simone and Nathan both advocate the merits of

the IB program for all students. "It offers so many opportunities that go beyond the academic, and students should take advantage of that," says Simone. "They are the people that can make a difference, the kids we are teaching are the ones who are going to be the leaders of tomorrow. They need to make the most of all of the opportunities they get throughout the program so they can be those people when they leave."

The family will shortly make the move to Singapore, which they are hoping will not be too much of a change – even if their new school is double the size of AISG. "I think because we've been here so long and really been with the school as it grows and been part of that, that gives us a great skills base wherever we go," says Simone.

There's no doubt the couple are looking forward to their next step. As Simone points out, "We are really excited about Singapore. It's got the bits of China that we like. It feels very familiar, you drive on the left, there's lots of Australian food, they speak English and Chinese, so we really get the best of both worlds. It's a really good move. It's all worked out." ■



1. Abigail donating hair to Connect4Cancer's annual Hair4Hope event at the 2019 PTA International Day.



I think the school supporting us kept us energized and committed to staying and doing more.

YEARS AT AISG: 2011-2019

jenny ostermiller:

THE MASTERMIND

AFTER EIGHT YEARS AS A COUNSELOR AT AISG, JENNY OSTERMILLER IS TAKING HER TALENTS TO THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN JAPAN THIS FALL. BEFORE SHE LEAVES, SHE CHATS ABOUT SMALL APARTMENTS, BACHELOR DEGREES AND WHAT SHE WILL MISS ABOUT GUANGZHOU.

"This April I finished my Psychometry degree. I have a BSc in History, a Master and a Specialist in School Counselling and Guidance, another Master of Educational Administration, plus now another Master of Psychometry," she says. "I

don't have children. I have cats and degrees!"
For the past eight years, Jenny has put her vast knowledge to excellent use at AISG, first as Middle School Counselor, and then as

Elementary School Counselor. "Both positions have been the best. In Middle School, I loved seeing my students go from not knowing what life was about, to adults with big dreams and big accomplishments. In Elementary School, there is so much acceptance and love from the students, that has been a fantastic experience. I wouldn't trade either of them."

A Dynamic Place

Jenny's career has taken her from the US to Venezuela, Valencia and Dubai, but Guangzhou gave her her first experience of Asia, one that she has thoroughly enjoyed. "This is the longest I've lived anywhere as a grown up!" she says with a laugh. "I love going out and walking by the river. There are so many changes happening, it's such a dynamic place, and that's been really interesting to experience."

And that feeling is not just because of the city, it's because of the community Jenny discovered at AISG. "I love coming to work in the morning

and the relationships I have with the kids. They care about me just as much as I care about them. Sometimes in Asia, there can be too much competition, but here everyone wants the kids to grow as individuals, just not at the expense of others. That's exciting to see."

And so her next move, to become Elementary School Counselor at the American School in Japan, is bittersweet. "This feels like my home now, and so it's going to be really hard to leave. I'll really miss the connections I made here, but I am excited about the challenge of a new department and new team. The school is working towards becoming a center of social and emotional learning, which as a counselor is really exciting to take forward."

She does admit to one particular worry about life in Japan. "I'm still wrapping my head around the idea of living in an apartment half the size of my current one!" Still, once she's settled in, we're sure Jenny will blossom in her new life in Japan. ■



I love coming to work in the morning, and the relationships I have with the kids. They care about me just as much as I care about them.



1. Jenny and the Middle School Administration at Dynasty Day in 2015. 2. Jenny and the hand puppets she uses in counseling classes.





We're 'all in', no matter where we are. AISG taught us that the more 'in' you are, the more you get out.

YEARS AT AISG: 2013-2019

will & laura the tragerts:

LEARNING AND GROWING TOGETHER

AFTER A WONDERFUL SIX YEARS AT AISG, WILL AND LAURA TRAGERT AND THEIR KIDS, OWEN, ELLA AND LUCY HEAD TO A NEW LIFE IN GERMANY. THEY WILL BE TAKING THEIR LOVE OF AISG – AND SOME CLOSE FRIENDS – WITH THEM.

"We have such a great time at AISG," says Will with a wide smile. "Our kids are excited to come to school every day. This morning, about 30 minutes before we had to leave, Lucy had her

backpack on and was to 'shouting, 'I'm ready!' 'I don't know what they put in the water, but it created a place where all five of us want to be."

The decision to come to AISG in 2013 was a big one for the couple – their first international position, in a place they knew little about. "We didn't even know where Guangzhou was – we had to Google it – and how to pronounce it!" admits Will. But the AISG positivity was hard to resist. "We actually offered ourselves the job before they offered it to us. We said 'yes, we're in, if you want to take us we'll do it'. We were just so excited because we got such a great feeling from the people we were talking to," says Will.

Will began as a math teacher in 2013 and Laura as the Middle and High School Learning Support Teacher. Will moved to Assistant Principal of Middle and High School, and Laura became the Elementary School Learning Support Teacher. They both say how lucky they have been to experience both roles. "I've loved both positions for different reasons," says Will. "What brings me joy is not the job I do, it's the people I work with and the school I work in. So, I've been really lucky."

Laura agrees. "Watching kids become adults, standing with them as they make life decisions, has been amazing," says Laura. "It's just as fun watching kids learn how to become mathematicians. They are both awesome experiences."

From the moment they arrived, the Tragerts threw themselves fully into school life. Will is well known for his mischievous smile and sense of fun. With fellow Assistant Principal Duncan FitzGerald, he dressed up as Jon Snow for WASC accreditation review, a school-wide accreditation program. Their unique double act inspired the AISG community.

While the family will be sad to leave AISG, they are thrilled that some of their closest friends, including Duncan and Bernadette FitzGerald, are also starting new lives in Germany – completely by chance. (see page 50 for more)

"Although it will be a three-hour drive instead of a five-minute walk to see each other, our relationship won't change," says Will. "I'm sure we'll be vacationing with them next year, although we haven't asked them yet!"

"One of the things AISG taught us is to go into things with an open mind," says Laura. "We have no idea what to expect from Germany, but we had no idea what to expect when we came here. We were just ready to dive into a community we wanted to be part of. We're 'all in', no matter where we are. AISG taught us that the more 'in' you are, the more you get out." ■

1. Will acting as MC during the 2017 PTA Holiday Bazaar.
2. Will and other faculty dressed up for Beach Day during Spirit Week.
3. The Tragert children dressed up for the 2019 Chinese New Year celebration.
4. Owen, Ella and Lucy look forward to going to school every day.



YEARS AT AISG: 2014–2019

duncan & bernadette the fitzgeralds:

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

DUNCAN AND BERNADETTE FITZGERALD CHOSE AISG BECAUSE THEY LIKED THE PEOPLE AND THE WELCOME IT GAVE THEIR FAMILY. AS THEY PREPARE TO HEAD TO A NEW CHALLENGE IN GERMANY, THEY DISCUSS HOW LIFE CHANGED FOR THEM AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN, ROBBIE AND EDIE, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

"AISG opened the door to the world for our family in many ways," says Duncan. After moving from Australia in 2014 with their two young children, Edie and Robbie, the family quickly adapted to their new, broader horizons – especially Robbie. "People call him the King of Er Sha because everybody knows him," says Bernadette. "He's so at home here, he tells everyone he meets that he is Chinese. Of course, they do a double take because he's blonde!"

Duncan and Bernadette attribute the kids' positivity to the close-knit community at AISG. "The village helped raise them," says Bernadette. "Our colleagues here are our social set, and they are also our friends and confidants," adds Duncan. "It's our community, and saying goodbye to people will be the toughest thing. I will have to try not to cry."

It's not hard to see why the family have made so many connections. Between them the couple have had five different roles over the last five years; Bernadette teaching grades 1 and 2 and Librarian, and Duncan teaching grade five and then promoted to Elementary School Assistant Principal.

"I've loved every bit," says Bernadette. "The

classroom is a little hub, and you get to learn together as people. The library is a big, bustling hub where I got to be with everyone in the community. I got to see the challenges and the positives of both sides of the coin – they were special things to be able to do."

Duncan agrees. "When you're in charge of a classroom, it's a special position because you are in charge of those kids for a whole year. You see their ups and downs, and the relationship you build with them can be game changing. I loved getting to know them as little humans. Once I moved to AP, that job was an honor in a different way. I could be a support to so many people, not just kids but teachers and parents as well. It's a real privilege to have that ability."

Strong Friendships

The friendships they made here have been key to making them feel at home. "It's great to have made friends on similar journeys to us, with kids the same age," says Duncan. "We'll holiday together, and some of the best family trips we have had were with other families from AISG."

So the great news is that two other families from Guangzhou are also moving to new schools in

“People call him (Robbie) the King of Er Sha because everybody knows him. He's so at home here, he tells everyone he meets that he is Chinese.”



Germany, including close friends Will and Laura Tragert (see page 48 for more). "Will and I have had kind of parallel careers, and we will both be doing the Elementary School Principal job for the first time in Germany. It will be great to be able to get on the phone and talk to someone in a similar situation in the same region and get some sound advice." The most remarkable thing is, neither family planned to make the same move – it was

a surprise to both when they found out. "We're so grateful for that, it's absolutely amazing that we are all going to be in the same place again," says Bernadette. "We couldn't have planned that, it really does feel like destiny."

Once they make the move to Germany, what are they going to miss most? "WeChat!" says Duncan. "I don't want to go back to the Stone



1



2



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6

1. Bernadette reading stories to students in the Er Sha Campus Library. 2. Duncan, Robbie, and Edie at the 2019 PTA Family Fun Day. 3. Duncan dressed as the God of Fortune at the 2018 Chinese New Year celebration. 4. Edie and friend writing Chinese calligraphy during Chinese New Year. 5. Robbie at his holiday classroom party in 2017. 6. The FitzGerals during the 2019 PTA International Day.

Age!" But, more seriously, he adds, "In Australia I was a surfer, and my motto was 'Work to live, don't live to work'. But that's different here. I think the people you work with in an international school become a little bit a part of your family. So, all these people, particularly in Er Sha, they are our life, and I will be very sad to say goodbye to them."

Bernadette nods in agreement. "We'll miss the

connections we have here," she says. "But it's also nice because we are taking some of Guangzhou with us."

It's clear that AISG has been an experience neither will forget. "It's a joy that we've had a chance to spend time with people and get to know them, and that's precious," says Duncan. "Here you get to do that with a lot of great people. I'll miss it all." ■

2018 WASC visit



AISG
WASC VISIT 2018

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
IS LIKE GOOD WINE
IT GETS BETTER EACH YEAR
THANK YOU FOR THE PART YOU PLAYED

IN THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR, DUNCAN FITZGERALD AND WILL TRAGERT DRESSED AS JON SNOW FROM THE TV SERIES *GAME OF THRONES*, ADDING SOME LIGHT-HEARTED FUN TO THE LONG AND CHALLENGING WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (WASC) ACCREDITATION PROCESS. THEY WILL BE FOREVER KNOWN FOR COINING THE PHRASE "IMPROVEMENT IS COMING".

“A lot of kids come back to say hi (when we came back in 2015), it’s so nice to have that connection across the years.”



YEARS AT AISG: 2001-2004, 2015-2019

julie andrew
lindsay & sinclair

THE DOUBLE ACT

AHEAD OF THEIR MOVE TO THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF BOMBAY, JULIE LINDSAY AND ANDREW SINCLAIR EXPLAIN HOW THEY ENJOYED AISG SO MUCH, THEY WORKED HERE TWICE!

Did you know the oldest trophy in the AISG trophy cabinet is for underwater hockey? Andrew Sinclair, former swim team coach, helped win it. “We used

to use hockey as an exercise at the end of swim meets,” he explains. “Then we decided to enter an underwater tournament with neighboring schools,

and we won! The trophy has been here ever since.”

It’s a fine achievement, but not Andrew’s only success at AISG. He also created the school’s first-ever Quiz Bowl team. “The first meeting, about 30 kids turned up. When they found out how hard the questions were, only 10 turned up next time!” But those who stayed loved it and encouraged others to join. “We’re really happy with the way it’s worked out,” says Andrew. “We came this close to first place in the Asian championships this year.”

Surprisingly, Andrew didn’t always plan to be a teacher. A former chef, he and teacher wife Julie moved to Qingdao, where she took up a teaching post while Andrew looked after their young son.

All looked settled, until their daughter’s second grade teacher quit on the first day of class. With no other options, Andrew stepped in. “Julie was giving me lesson plans, my daughter was in the class, so I was kind of thrown in at the deep end,” he laughs. Maybe so, but it inspired him to retrain as a teacher, using his English Masters as the foundation for a distance teaching degree.

From AISG to...AISG

In 2001, the couple made their first move to AISG, where Julie took the post of Elementary Homeroom Teacher. For Andrew, starting at AISG

as an English teacher “was kind of crazy. I was teaching kindergarten, primary, grades 4, 7, 8 and 9 – pretty much the whole school. I had a cart with all my stuff, and I just moved it from class to class. That’s how I got rolling at AISG.”

In 2004, the couple left for a United Nations school in Aleppo, Syria, and then to the Philippines, where Julie moved into High School Counseling. “I found that really rewarding, especially the social and emotional aspect – you really can make a difference to the lives of young people.”

But they liked AISG so much, they came back in 2015, Julie taking the position of High School Counselor while Andrew returned to his role as High School English teacher. Things may have changed since they left, but the couple felt immediately at home on their return. “A lot of kids come back to say, ‘hi’, it’s so nice to have that connection across the years,” says Julie.

The family are shortly headed to the American School of Bombay. They have never been to India before, but that didn’t put them off. “The first time we visited was when they flew us in to look at the school. But we’d already signed the contract by then!” says Julie.

Although it will be quite a change, they are looking forward to their new challenge – and we wish them the best of luck with their move. ■



1. Julie and Andrew’s daughter, Eilidh, singing in the 2002 ES Winter Concert. 2. Julie and Andrew’s son, Alasdair, in Preschool at The Garden Hotel campus, 2001. 3. Halloween Party at The Greenery Campus in 2001

other departing faculty

IN GRATITUDE, WE SAY GOODBYE!

This year, we say farewell to 29 of our beloved faculty members who have given so much to our community. Each of them departs leaving a unique and lasting contribution to our school. We thank you for all that you have given and wish you all the best on your journey. Aside from the faculty who have worked at AISG over five years featured in the magazine, the following faculty will also conclude their AISG adventure in 2018-2019:

OTHER DEPARTING FACULTY:

1. Kristen Elliott - Grade 5 Teacher,
Time at AISG: 2016 - 2019
Next Step: Arlington, Washington, USA
2. Henry Hall - Grade 3 Teacher
Time at AISG: 2005 - 2019
Next Step: Tampa, Florida, USA.
3. Jane Healey - Kindergarten Teacher,
Time at AISG: 2016 - 2019
Next Step: New Zealand
4. Adrienne Higley - High School Biology /
Integrated Science Teacher
Time at AISG: 2017 - 2019
Next Step: Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
5. Tanya LeClair - Elementary School
Innovation Coach,
Time at AISG: 2016 - 2019
Next Step: Seoul Foreign School, Korea
6. Ben Leong - Fine Art Teaching Assistant,
Time at AISG: 2016 - 2019
Next Step: Brisbane, Australia
7. Fiona Liddell - Middle School Language Arts /
Social Studies and Multi-media Teacher
Time at AISG: 2015 - 2019
Next Step: Academia Cotopaxi, Quito, Ecuador
8. Daphne Ong - Elementary School Teaching
Assistant
Time at AISG: 2017 - 2019
Next Step: Substitute teacher at AISG
9. Alli Pook - Middle and High School EAL
Teaching Assistant
Luke Russell - Middle and High School PE /
Health Teacher
Time at AISG: 2017 - 2019
*Next Step: Australian International School of
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates*
11. Nicole Reid - Grade 4 Teacher
Time at AISG: 2018 - 2019
*Next Step: American International School
of Egypt - West Campus*
12. Cynthia Mora Salas - High School Visual
Arts Teacher
Time at AISG: 2016 - 2019
Next Step: Costa Rica
13. Vernita Vallez - Middle School / High School
Learning Support Teacher
Jon Holmer - Substitute teacher at AISG
Time at AISG: 2017 - 2019
Next Step: American School of Nicaragua





#aisgalumni

Rams around the world means friends around the world!

1. Thomas and Karlo haven't seen each other for 10 years but stayed connected online over the years. The two recently met up in Manila, where Karlo is now working and living.
2. A decade on, these AISG alumni from the Classes of 2010 and 2011, now based in Hong Kong, often get together and catch up on life.
3. One of the best things about being an international school student is no matter where you travel to, AISG Rams are always around. Our alumni Jacky, Elva, Nancy and Nino from the Class of 2017 got together for a mini-reunion in Chicago.
- 4-6. Calvin Lo, who is now studying at the University of Western Australia, spent his memorable Middle School years at AISG. Calvin and his friends have stayed connected after all these years. He started out the new year by catching up with these far-flung Rams from Australia to Hong Kong.

7. AISG alumnae Nina, Class of 2009, and Arfiya, Class of 2006, got together in NYC! Arfiya is now the Associate Political Affairs Officer at the United Nations Headquarters and Nina has recently established 9212 Data LLC, a consultancy focused on sustainability reporting.
8. 20 Rams represented AISG and participated in the Seoul Model United Nations hosted by Korean International School in November. Mr. Peter Parker, a former AISG teacher who now lives in Seoul, coordinated SEOMUN this year. No matter where Mr. Parker is, he always aims to give students a deeper understanding of the complexities of global issues and help them develop their public speaking skills.
9. Our former School Services staff member, Faith Zheng, and Science Lab assistant, Annie Ou, had a nice gathering with AISG former teachers Mr. Don Lotze and Mrs. Joan Lotze in Guangzhou! Mr. Lotze was the High School Biology and Physics teacher and coach of the High School girls' soccer team, while Mrs. Lotze was a grade three homeroom teacher.
10. AISG Class of 2014 graduate Natalie, a student at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, visited her classmate Sabine, who is studying at Melbourne Law School, last fall. Sabine showed Natalie around the city, and the two caught up on everything that has happened since High School.

tips from alumni



THOMAS HUANG

Former Student (2008-2010)
Business Developer,
AGORIZE

What are you up to these days?

I'm part of a startup in Hong Kong organizing online-to-offline open innovation challenges. Through our platform, we connect leading corporations with our global network of five million innovators. My passion is using my analytical mindset to find new and creative solutions to problems. Helping clients solve their pain points in a new and innovative way, while empowering young people through entrepreneurship, is very invigorating, which is why I'm on the business development team.

What suggestions would you give to Rams who are considering stepping into the same business field?

Now is the perfect time to try starting your own business! When you're young, gain some experience through internships, networking events etc. Talk to lots of smart people and stay curious. Apply for some entrepreneurship challenges or business case competitions – there are lots of free resources and money to assist you in your startup career! Network, network, network!

How do you overcome challenges at work?

Keep calm and try to understand others' perspectives. Whenever I run into a problem, I try to step back and look at it from a bigger picture – is this problem really as big as it currently seems? Probably not. Do I need to address it still? Yes. If you can't figure it out, try a different perspective or bring in a friend. Brainstorming with diverse people definitely helps.

SHEILA WU

Former Student (1998 – 2007)
Associate Account Director,
PUBLICIS COMMUNICATIONS



What are you up to these days?

I work for an advertising firm in Guangzhou. What keeps this job fresh are the infinite possibilities for creativity every day. We collaborate with clients from different categories and provide numerous ideas that our team members bounce off each other in the form of brainstorming meetings to cater to varying market needs.

What suggestions would you give to Rams who are considering stepping into the same business field?

Warning: Advertising is definitely not for the faint of heart. If you have heard anything about this field, it's true! There may be a lot of overtime. Choose this field only if you know about it enough to ignite passion in you to pursue this path.

How do you overcome challenges at work?

Overcoming challenges in advertising is virtually the same as any other industry – the key is to always find a solution to your challenge that works for you.



GWEN FARM

Class of 2018
Neuroscience Student at The
University of British Columbia

What are you up to these days?

I'm currently pursuing an Honors in Behavioral Neuroscience and am hoping to minor in either Chemistry or Human Physiology. Prior to entering college, I always had the mindset of completing my degree as fast as possible (meaning I'd take a full course load of six classes a term while most students only take three to four). What I would have done differently is lighten my course load so I could better balance my academics and extracurriculars. I wish I realized sooner that university isn't just about your grades, but rather the connections and experiences you make.

What are the differences between life in college and at AISG?

Transitioning between AISG and college was rather hard for me, as it took a lot longer for me to feel like I belonged. At AISG, it was a lot easier to feel a part of a community, but in university, as there are tens of thousands of students, you feel like a tadpole, sometimes out of place. In terms of life, you definitely are a lot more independent, and it's a lot harder to balance extracurriculars with academics.

Any advice for underclassmen at AISG who would like to study in Canada or at UBC?

All schools in Canada are great overall. I'd recommend choosing a school that's more focused or ranked higher in terms of the field you want to study in. With that being said, take your time to explore what your interests are and try to set your priorities straight. Different people adjust differently so if you're feeling like you don't belong, take your time and don't worry!

TONY TANG

Class of 2011
CEO, Hao Xian Educational
Services Ltd.



When did you start your education business?

I started the business in November 2017.

How did you turn the idea into a practical business plan?

Putting the educational services business into practicality was a matter of chance and coincidence. I was always interested in the preschool business, and right after I graduated, a family friend introduced a piece of land specifically for educational use and surrounded by residential area. From that point on, we immediately started acquiring permits for construction and hiring people.

What suggestions would you give to AISG Rams who are interested in building up their own business?

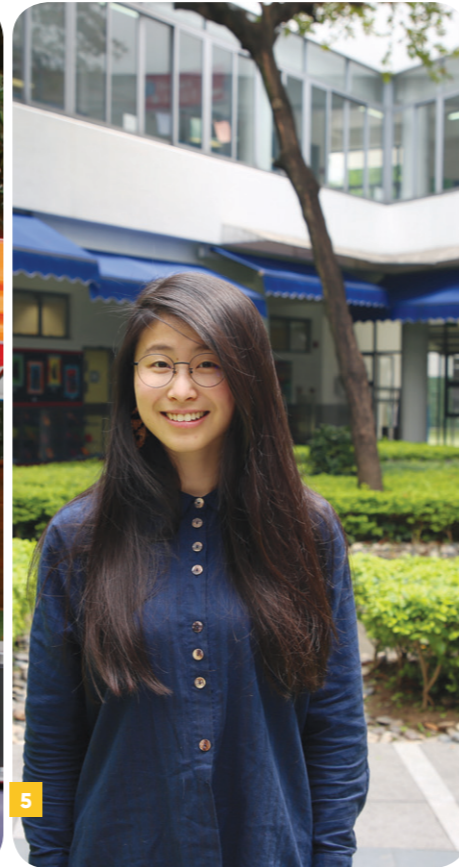
For me personally, I am always on the lookout for demand. Whenever I am driving, talking with friends or even on a walk or run, I would always observe and think, "what is lacking here?". For example, 2015 was the end of the one child policy in China, hence 2018-2019 would be the first batch of these "second children" who are in need of early childhood education.

How do you overcome challenges at work?

Whenever times get tough, I try to stay optimistic by thinking about the best possible outcome.



1



5



6



7



2



4



8



3



9

return of the rams

1. Maggie Chen from the Class of 2010 and her company, Eko, joined the AISG Holiday Bazaar by manning their own booth. All of the proceeds received at the event were donated to charity.
2. We had our alumnus Boon Yeow Koh from the Class of 2016 back on campus right before the winter holiday! Boon Yeow has just finished his two year service in the Singapore Armed Forces and now is a freshman at Arizona State University.
3. AISG alumni from the Classes of 2011 to 2017 were back on campus to give advice on making the transition from High School to college smoother. (Left-Right) FRONT: Ivan Lo, Chris Zhang, Jenny Chen, Sammi Xu, Abby Chung, Elaine Yang, Rachel Lo. BACK: Jun Takaki, Charles Tang, Ardeshir Takaki, Ibrahim Bah, Eric Huang, Ibrahim Sarsour, Anderson Hsiao, Nikhil Budhdev, Rogelio Yao.
4. AISG alumnae Fuzan Nijrabi from the Class of 2013 and Maggie Chen from the Class of 2010 returned to Science Park Campus to jump in on the fun at the PTA Family Fun Day.
5. We welcomed our 2011 grad Silvy Liu back to our Er Sha Campus. Silvy is an artist who creates experimental projects in creative interdisciplinary education. Currently, she is using her expertise in art, architecture and education for the Cardboard Village project.
6. Linda Luo and Lucy Yu from the Class of 2013 visited their alma mater before they start their new journey. Lucy has started a new job at Google in Seattle while Linda is pursuing her Master in Teaching in Sydney.
7. Mr. Gary MacPhie, (AISG Elementary School Principal from 2007 - 2017), and his wife, Barbara (Admissions Officer from 2007 - 2016) were back on campus this spring. Both Gary and Barbara visited Er Sha and Science Park campuses during their time in Guangzhou, catching up with students and staff at AISG.
8. AISG alumna Andrew Dai, who graduated in 2013, returned to AISG with his colleagues to see what has changed on campus since he was here. After graduating from college in the U.S., Andrew is now based in Guangzhou as an architect.
9. Former school engineer Si Hu returned to Guangzhou and caught up with Mr. MacPhie and Mr. Elliott.

AISG alumni online network launched!

We are excited to announce the official launch of our AISG Alumni Network - a safe and secure online community dedicated to helping our alumni build their personal and professional networks.

The new AISG Alumni Network is a fully interactive and easy-to-use platform that allows our graduated Rams to re-connect with classmates as they move into the next stage of life. By joining, alumni can share their educational and professional experience, post and find job opportunities, provide and receive mentorship, create and join meet-up groups, and so much more!

Are you an alumnus of AISG? If so, we encourage you to sign up for the AISG Alumni Network and reconnect with our RamNation today! Sign-up takes less than two minutes and is as simple as connecting your Facebook or LinkedIn account.

www.aisgalumni.org



did you know?

WITH THE AISG ALUMNI NETWORK YOU CAN...

Share updates and milestones on the homepage of the AISG Alumni Network.

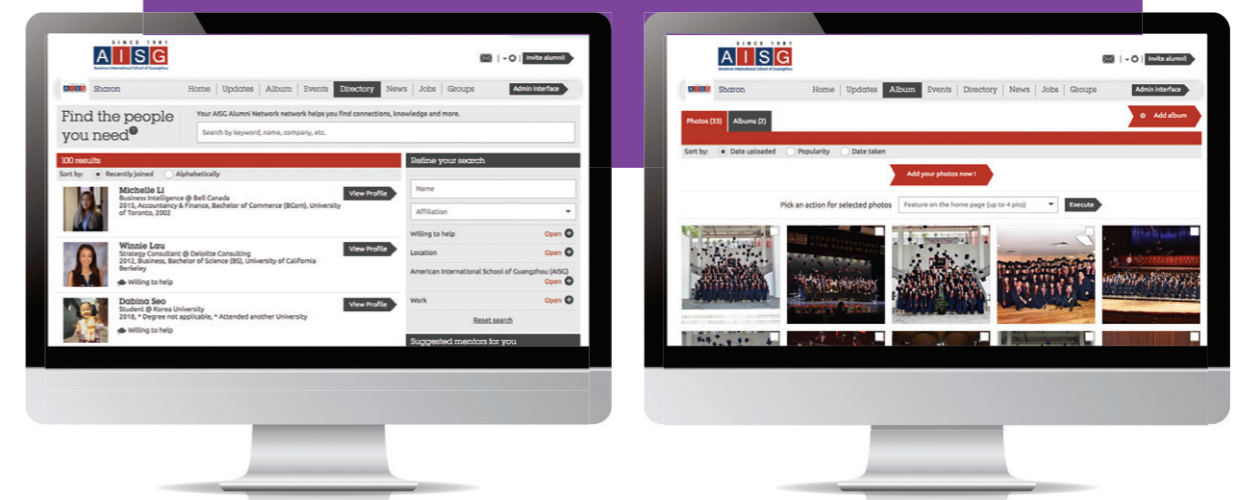
Look for mentors using our directory.

Post or search for events to attend.

Create albums and post photos of your class or events.

Check out up-to-date AISG social media posts in the News section.

Find or post job opportunities in the Jobs section.



THE FIRST EVER

AISG alumni networking night

We welcomed 50 AISG alumni back to Er Sha Island for our first official alumni networking night on June 9, 2018! Hosted at Le Fournil de Pierre restaurant, it was certainly a night a to remember. From the Class of 2007 to our newly-graduated Class of 2018, our alumni turned out to reminisce with old friends, make new connections, tour the campus and stroll down memory lane. We look forward to seeing you all again at future alumni events.



way back when

IN 1989, 1999, 2009

2019 marked AISG's 38th year as the Premier International School in south China. But do you have any idea what AISG was like 10 years ago? 20 years ago? Or even 30 years ago?

Let's take a look.

1989



1. The Garden Hotel grounds doubled as an outdoor play space for AISG students.
2. Elementary School students singing Christmas carols during the holiday season.
3. This is what a classroom looked like in the 1980's!
4. A group of Boy Scouts celebrating Thanksgiving outdoors.
5. AISG students enjoying a Thanksgiving feast together.
6. Elementary students and their teacher in class.
7. AISG students snap a group photo in front of the Garden Hotel.



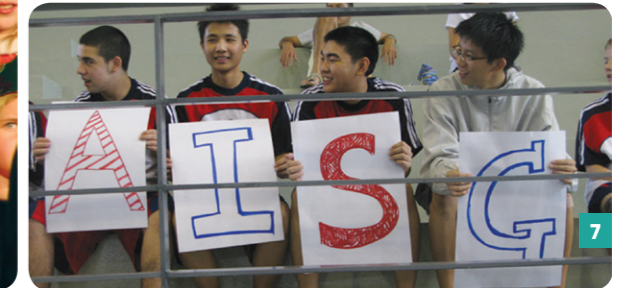
1999



1. The former director David Shawver with the PTA members in 1999.
2. A moment of Middle School camaraderie.
3. Jewell, Abril and Zoe making new friends at a local public school.
4. The Elementary School musical has been a tradition at AISG for over 20 years.
5. Middle School students on a field trip to Guilin.
6. Posing 90's style!
7. Indian students showing off colorful traditional outfits on International Day.



2009



1. An action-packed Running of the Rams by the riverside on Er Sha Island.
2. Elementary students representing all the different sports on offer.
3. ES Chinese New Year Assembly.
4. Calm and serenity at Er Sha campus.
5. Elementary students all dressed up for United Nations Day.
6. High School teacher, Mr. Tom Craig, was game enough to volunteer to get pied in the face for a fundraiser.
7. High School student athletes getting into the spirit of things.



alumni by the numbers

408

AISG ALUMNI
INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS

UP BY 150 FOLLOWERS IN 18-19

AISG Alumni
Facebook followers 561

223 Alumni
Linked In
connections

The country where
most of our **social media
follower** are based:

USA

50+

ALUMNI BACK ON
CAMPUS IN 18-19

Alumni studied at
AISG for 10+ years

83+

2
5+

Alumni parents enrolled their
children at AISG in 18-19

“Tied the knot” in 18-19

love being a RAM

Once a Ram, always a Ram! No matter how far our Rams travel, their hearts always stay close to AISG.

I really enjoyed the different activities here, and this school really helped me grow as a person by making me more outgoing and helping me step out of my comfort zone.

YAN LI, CLASS OF 2017

I really enjoyed my time here at AISG. I made so many friends, not just from my grade, but both above and below and I hope that I can continue to cherish this in the future.

JERRY JULIUS, CLASS OF 2018

I think AISG has truly transformed me as a person. It helped me grow to previously inconceivable heights, to reach for goals that seemed impossible to reach. I truly appreciate the small and tight-knit community in AISG and the diversity of opportunities in the school.

MICHELLE ZHUANG, CLASS OF 2018

I still look back at the 11 years I spent at AISG, as a teacher and tech coach, with fondness. AISG is a great institution of learning! Once a Ram, always a Ram!

DR. SHANNON DOAK,
FORMER TEACHER AND TECH COACH

I loved my time here in AISG, especially my close friends and teachers. I also appreciated the Arts program a lot.

GLORIA HUANG, CLASS OF 2017

It taught me a lot on how to adapt to society as a whole. AISG has been the main influence on who I have become today.

MAX CHEN, CLASS OF 2018

I found the best friends of my entire life here at this school. The teachers were like friends and truly cared about their students. It was a memorable experience, and I'm a proud Ram.

PUNYA BHARGAVA, CLASS OF 2017

My experience here at AISG was wonderful. I came in as a close-minded Taiwanese boy who barely spoke English. AISG not only taught me English, but it also taught me how to communicate with diverse people—how to make friends in a new environment with people who don't share identical interests.

PETER LEE, CLASS OF 2017

I made lifelong friends, and being an AISG alumni will probably remain an integral part of my identity.

IN HWA MO, CLASS OF 2018

alumni celebrations

Congratulations to our alumni on these milestones in your lives.



1. **Carson McKelvey** (Class of 2010) represented Tofugear—Microsoft’s key partner for retail innovation—to receive the award for Independent Software Vendor of the Year in Shanghai.
2. **Jessica Shea Cook** (Class of 2004) and her husband, Jeff Cook, welcomed their daughter, Jade, to the family! Jade was born in September 2018 in the United States, where Jessica and her family are based.
3. **Addison Woodside and Caleb Sng**, (both from the Class of 2015) are engaged. They are based in Portland, Oregon, and planning on a summer 2019 wedding.
4. **Jin Chasombat** (Class of 2004) just got married! In March, Jin’s AISG classmates traveled to Bangkok to attend the wedding and share in the couple’s happiness.
5. AISG former student **Thomas Huang** won seed funding of HK\$100,000 at the Cyberport University Partnership Program! Thomas and his team had a winning Fintech idea that aims to empower Asian women, providing financial education to increase their wealth through investing.

THANK YOU

acknowledgments

Last year, we published the first-ever issue of our alumni magazine. We’re excited to continue sharing memories, updates and stories from our alumni and soon-to-be alumni in this second issue. We’d like to give thanks to our alumni and all community members who support the AISG Alumni Program and contributed to the creation of this alumni magazine. This project could not have been accomplished without you.

A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

- | | | |
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