RUI LONG 瑞龙

ISB Alumni Magazine

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The Dragon Network

Dear ISB Alumni,

Welcome to our second issue of Rui Long for 2014-15! In this issue, we focus on alumni making great strides as technophiles in their careers or studies.

When the ISB Alumni Association's newsletter was first published in 1995, the only way to access it was from your letter box or an antiquated fax machine. Now, we reach the inboxes of our thousands-strong alumni network around the world instantly with the click of a mouse. Our magazine can be read on laptops, desktop computers and tablets, offering convenience and interactivity. However, technology hasn't only revolutionized our communication; it's also revolutionized the careers of our alumni.

In the following pages, we bring you the stories of those who have achieved success in their fields or are working diligently towards it. We celebrate the achievements of Elva Jiang (Class of 2011), a rising fashion designer who recently won a prestigious scholarship for her innovative wearable tech collection, and find out how internships have given computer science major Stephanie Zhan (Class of 2011) a valuable foothold in Silicon Valley.

We also explore the impact of technology on the media as witnessed by International Business Times journalist Michelle FlorCruz (Class of 2008), whose profession has undergone a dramatic shift in the digital age.

Finally, we deepen your connection to ISB by sharing stories of students inspired to follow in the footsteps of alumni in tech, and track the evolution of tech infusion at school through the insight of teacher Harold Daw.

Technology allows us to keep our network strong through our alumni **Facebook** page, which serves as a great platform to find out about current events and stories our editorial team is working on that you might be able to enrich through your own experience. Also, don't forget to check ISB's **YouTube** channel regularly to see the exciting learning that goes on each day.

We wish you a peaceful and prosperous Year of the Sheep and look forward to seeing you on campus next time you're in Beijing.

Yáng nián kuàilè!

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Designing Fashion of the Future

Innovative designer and recent scholarship recipient Elva Jiang reflects on her achievements and aspirations in fashion's newest frontier: wearable technology

For most of wearable technology's short history, style hasn't been a priority among designers of devices that favor function over fashion. From clunky calculator watches in the 1980s to gawky Bluetooth headsets in the early 2000s, the misconception that consumers will buy "techcessories" no matter their appearance is rapidly fading.

Elva Jiang (Class of 2011) is part of the new generation of fashion designers giving wearable tech a makeover. The Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) senior made headlines in the fashion world last month when she was awarded the $30,000 Geoffrey Beene National Scholarship for 2015 from the Young Menswear Association(YMA) Fashion Scholarship Fund.

Rising fashion star

Elva earned the attention of fashion and gadget aficionados alike for her Spiked Orchid collection of smart rings, earrings, bracelets and necklaces. Crafted from fine silver and semi-precious stones, her jewelry glimmers in stark contrast to the sweaty rubber wristbands many people associate with fitness-monitoring devices.

Elva's versatile collection of smart luxury jewelry hosts bio and emotional feedback, performance and GPS tracking, and Bluetooth-enabled alerts. All formed part of her case study that sealed her scholarship success.

"When I found out I was one of the [scholarship] winners, three words came to my mind: 'You made it.' Completing the case study lasted seven months. There were some ups and downs throughout the process, so when I finally succeeded I felt relieved more than anything," she recalled.

"Winning the scholarship means far more than financial support. Ever since I won a $5,000 YMA scholarship in 2014, I have had been able to meet with some top executives such as [Macy's Group vice president] Marc Mastronardi, [Barneys New York vice president] Daniella Vitale and [DDK Apparel CEO] Paul Rosengard, and pick their brains for tips to become a successful leader."

Gadgets for golf

Elva initially intended to major solely in fashion marketing at SCAD. However, she made the switch during her freshman year to double major in fashion design and fashion marketing and management to "stand out in such a competitive environment" and broaden her career opportunities.

"I get to learn the whole spectrum from designing a garment, making a garment, to sourcing a garment and marketing for a brand. I also enjoy working with the diverse community of professors and students from all over the world, just like at ISB," she said.

Just as project-based learning at ISB aligns students with their passions, the Spiked Orchid collection is closely linked to another field Elva excels in beyond fashion: golf. Since dominating at ACAMIS tournaments during her days with the ISB golf team, Elva has continued her star quality on the fairway as an All-American athlete on the SCAD golf team.

Elva's desire for continuous improvement of her golf game partly inspired her line of smart jewelry. Using an accompanying app, users of her wearable tech jewelry can track their golf or tennis swing with a motion sensor, receive bio-feedback with the skin-conductance sensor, access her favorite music, and stay on top of incoming messages via Bluetooth.

Elva noted her golf teammates have welcomed the opportunity to improve their performance and look glamorous on the green.

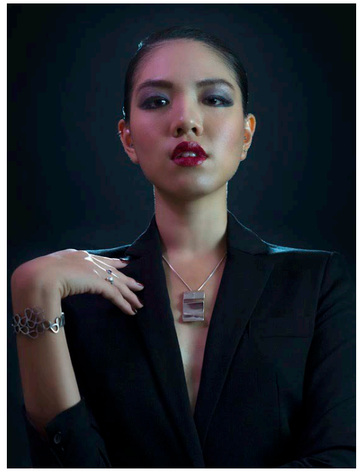
"I showed the Spiked Orchid collection to SCAD fashion majors who are also on the golf team. They all responded positively and said it is something they would wear both to complement their style and to help improve the golf game," said the Taiwan native.

Infusing tech in fashion

Speaking at the 2014 New York Times International Luxury Conference, Intel CEO Brian Krzanich said: "In order for wearable technology to succeed, it has to be fashion-forward enough that people would want to wear it independent of the technology that's inside of it."

Elva kept this mantra in mind when designing her smart jewelry collection. "My decision to combine style and technology derived from the research I did during the preliminary stage. I read numerous articles on wearable technology and responses of fashion icons on those existing wearable tech products," she said.

Elva Jiang's collection of smart jewelry inspired by her interests in fashion, golf and technology won her the Geoffrey Beene National Scholarship.



According to a recent report by technology research and advisory firm Gartner, shipments of health- and fitness-tracking wearables are forecast to reach 91.3 million units by the end of 2016. Similarly, shipments of "smart garments" that monitor users' fitness are forecast to skyrocket from 0.1 million units in 2014 to 26 million units in 2016.

"Technology will definitely play a major role in fashion in the future. In fact, it has already become a vital part of major brands such as Alexander Wang, Ralph Lauren and Under Armor in terms of fabric innovation. I predict technology will start to influence jewelry brands as well in ways that technological functionality will become a basic consumer demand," said Elva.

Reflecting on her achievements, Elva said her nine-year education at ISB instilled her with the study and work ethic essential to excel in the fashion world. Goal-setting and creating a healthy balance are also key ingredients for success, she said.

"Without my experience of completing the IB Diploma Programme, I would not have the tenacity to pursue two majors, be a student athlete and complete the YMA case study. I give full credit to the education I received at ISB," she said.

Elva's post-graduation plan is to be a fashion buyer or merchandiser in New York "for at least two to three years" before possibly returning to China where she said the fashion scene beckons with "unlimited opportunities."

Having a Blast with Engineering

Ivan Wong having fun during a rocket science class at Harvey Mudd College in California.

During his two years as an ammunition specialist in the Singapore military, Ivan Wong (Class of 2008) learned the value of teamwork. Currently preparing to graduate with a bachelor of science in engineering from Harvey Mudd College (HMC) in California, Ivan is now using that same spirit of collaboration to light the fuse of a promising tech career.

"I really enjoy being able to communicate with all types of engineers. I realized that engineering in the 21st century can't be categorized into distinct units, and there is so much cross-disciplinary communication required to do a job well," said the Singaporean native.

Ivan has researched battery technology throughout his studies at HMC, specifically developing production techniques for a prototype fluoride ion battery. He has also interned at graphic processing unit giant Nvidia's hardware engineering division, where he worked on circuit boards and characterization techniques for board power consumption.

The inspiration for Ivan's enthusiasm toward engineering can be partially attributed to his chemistry teacher at ISB Mr. David Beckstead, who he describes as "one of my favorite teachers ever."

"He inspired me to ask questions, even when I would have no idea what the answer might be. Mr. [Francis] Panych was also an influence; he taught special relativity in a fantastic manner and I still remember his proofs for time dilation to this day," said Ivan.

As he prepares to embark on his own career, Ivan noted some of the most important lessons for technophiles aren't learned in books.

"The tech industry, specifically Silicon Valley, is about who you know. Make sure that you get to know your professors well, because they will have past students and other contacts in industry who will come in handy. Don't try to fit in to the stereotype of 'geeks' or 'nerds,' rather be a normal person who can communicate effectively," he said.

Corporate Social Media a Bag of Tricks

Iris Chen reveals why effective marketing on social media requires knowing your audience and their interests

You might know Amsterdam as the "city of bicycles" or "city of canals," but the Dutch capital also enjoys a well-deserved cultural reputation as the "city of museums" with around 100 such buildings dedicated to everything from Anne Frank to zoological specimens. It's no wonder then that standing out from the crowd on social media is a major challenge for Iris Chen (Class of 2008), marketing executive at the Museum of Bags and Purses.

Browse your social media feed and you're likely to be inundated with photos of friends' birthdays, newborns and nuptials in addition to the odd cute cat video or poignant news article. But what is it that makes you want to click on a link, retweet a post or double tap a photo?

"Being relevant [on social media] is the biggest challenge. There are so many news items, fun facts and stories that you could post on Facebook or Twitter, but the key task is making your material relevant to your target market and audience. You want to enlighten and inform your followers about your expertise," said Iris, who has worked at the museum since September 2014.

Another challenge with corporate social media is attracting followers and growing "likes" for your company's page. It's easy for Justin Bieber to attract tens of millions more fans with an album release, but a museum faces a tougher task promoting a new exhibition.

Iris Chen (top right) and the Museum of Bags and Purses in Amsterdam.

"What can museums do to make the content more interesting? What kind of information would your followers like to see and hear? These are all questions that one needs to ask when working with social media," explained Iris, who graduated with a bachelor's of science in international hospitality management at Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne in Switzerland in 2012.

After a brief stint working in London during the 2012 Olympics, Iris moved back to the Netherlands where she was born and raised until she was seven. There she held positions at different companies in corporate sales and recruitment before joining the Museum of Bags and Purses.

Fluent in English, Dutch and Chinese, one of Iris's primary goals is to tap the burgeoning Chinese tourist market in the Netherlands. The number of Middle Kingdom travelers to the country hit 250,000 last year, up 18 percent year-on-year.

"There are many social media platforms where you can reach the Chinese population. We are currently collaborating with a marketing company, which is setting up our company profile on Chinese online platforms WeChat, Baidu and QQ. With these technological platforms and my continued account development within the Chinese tourism market, we hope to increase the total of Chinese visitors to our museum," she said.

Standing out from the IT Crowd

Experience gained from internships with tech giants has given computer science major and budding entrepreneur Stephanie Zhan a head start in the industry

Stephanie Zhan (Class of 2011) is preparing to graduate from Stanford University with a bachelor's degree in computer science, but you could be forgiven for thinking she has already carved out a lucrative tech career based on her resume. She serves on the NextGen Advisory Board at the Computer History Museum in Silicon Valley and has gained valuable industry experience from four internships. Add to the equation her experience as a research and teaching assistant plus her leadership role with Business Association for Stanford Entrepreneurial Students, and you have to wonder if she has any free time to herself.

"The biggest challenge is juggling all the activities that I want to get involved in with academics, professional events and social activities. Another big challenge for me is learning how to say 'no' to an exciting opportunity or event," said Stephanie.

A cutthroat job market for tech graduates means they must use the best tools at their disposal to come out ahead. Gone are the days of employers willing to take a chance on a bright-eyed graduate full of promise but light on experience. Nowadays, the expectation is on graduates to bring industry experience so they can smoothly transition from college to the corporate world.

Starting out at startups

Stephanie started at Stanford as an economics major. She initially switched to management science and engineering after being "bitten by the startup bug," before settling on computer science in her sophomore year.

"I loved being immersed in the world of startups and I knew I wanted more. I learned what the firm was looking for: a founding team that had proven to gel in the past, and solutions to problems that the founders had experienced themselves. This drove me further in the technical direction, and I realized that I wanted to make the most of my time in college and do something I would otherwise not," she explained.

Internships also allow students to see the relevance of their study when they get to try it out in the tech world. In summer 2013, Stephanie interned in product marketing with Google, helping design and launch the Tips & Tricks function that shows users features of the new Google Maps app. The following year she interned with Google's newly acquired Nest Labs, which makes "smart" thermostats and smoke alarms for homes.

"After interning in Google, I wanted the experience of working at a startup and I loved Nest's vision of revolutionizing unloved products in the home. I helped the firm design a product that has not been launched yet, and it was a fascinating experience," said Stephanie, who during her three-month internship delivered presentations to the company's leaders.

Silicon Valley gender gap

Despite the success of women including Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg and Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer, the tech industry has had a hard time shaking its "boys club" image. A 2013 report by research company GMI found only 3 percent of tech startups are founded by women, while a study last year by the Catalyst think tank revealed 73 percent of women in tech feel like outsiders compared to 17 percent of men.

During her Introduction to Computer Science course, Stephanie was the only female student in her section. In her upper classes, it was a similar story where she was one of "around 10 females in a class of 100-plus students." Despite the gender disparity, she insists there has never been a better time for women in the tech industry to, in her words, "own it."

"Firms are making a conscious effort to break out of this image and bring equal opportunity and equality to all their employees. Contrary to popular thought, there are quite a few advantages to being one of a small number of women in the tech industry at all," she said.

After graduation, Stephanie plans to follow in the footsteps of many drawn to Silicon Valley by launching a startup. Although she hasn't settled on a particular field, she is already thinking big. "There are so many industries that are about to undergo a huge transformation – finance, healthcare and education, among many others. There is a world of opportunity out there. I want to be able to use my skills, resources and network to make an impact on the world," she said.

Stephanie Zhan reconnects with ISB's former alumni reunion coordinator Mick Green (top left) and head of school Tarek Razik.

Innovation a Core Value for Apple Upstart

Jeffrey Zhang discovered key differences between tech giants and startups during his internships as a computer science major at UC Berkeley

Jeffrey poses at 1 Infinite Loop, the address of Apple's headquarters, during his internship with the tech giant from May to August in 2014.

Jeffrey Zhang (Class of 2011) is on the cusp of living his tech dream. The computer science major will be staying in Silicon Valley after he graduates this year from the University of California, Berkeley, to work as a designer at Apple.

Although he hasn't ruled out a possible future shift to product management, Jeffrey is eager to make the most of a career that firmly aligns with his passion for programming.

Like many in his field, Jeffrey has made every effort to gain valuable industry experience through internships throughout his studies. Last summer, he crafted a user-facing tool from research during an internship with Apple's user experience design team. But he hasn't exclusively focused on big corporations, noting that some of his most valuable lessons were learned from tech startups.

"At startups, a big challenge is that you are expected to achieve a lot in a short amount of time and find solutions to any problem. This is because startups tend to have fewer employees, so each employee has bigger responsibilities," he said. "There is more bureaucracy at large corporations, which can be a challenge. The ideas you have and want to build will likely be reviewed by higher management first, so things generally move more slowly."

Jeffrey said he chose to pursue computer science because he was drawn to it as a "relevant and challenging field" that fosters innovation through the creation of games, online application or artificial intelligence.

His experience he gained through internships also ignited a passion for product strategy and design in the tech industry.

"I came into contact with a plethora of different roles in the tech industry, from software engineers to product managers and designers. As I recognized the types of problems people in these roles were solving, I became more interested in thinking about these user-focused problems, such as finding the optimum feature set and defining a positive user experience. I liked the idea of being the user advocate and representing their interests in the product development process," he explained.

Jeffrey with his manager at The Climate Corporation during his internship as a software engineer in summer 2013.

Technological Revolution in Education

ISB teacher Harold Daw reflects on how technology is broadening students' horizons and unlocking new learning possibilities

During his university days, Harold Daw relied on a typewriter to painstakingly tap out his essays. There was no Internet, no spell check and no Ctrl-Z function to magically undo his errors.

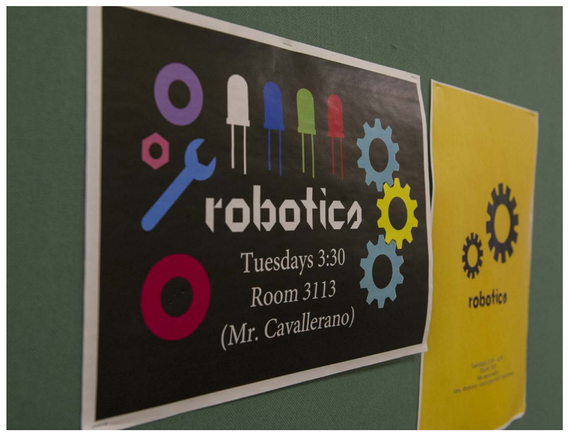
Now, the Grade 5 homeroom teacher's students each have laptops faster and more powerful than the $20 million supercomputers made just a decade before they were born.

The technological revolution sweeping the world has changed education and cemented a belief among Generation Z, or youngsters born post-2000, that nothing is impossible.

"Children growing up with technology see infinite possibilities. Technology has opened doors to areas we previously had never thought about. When I was going to school, you were pretty limited in the number of directions you could go. This is the first tech-infused generation; it's a part of their life," said Mr. Daw, who joined ISB in 2010 as a high school technology teacher.

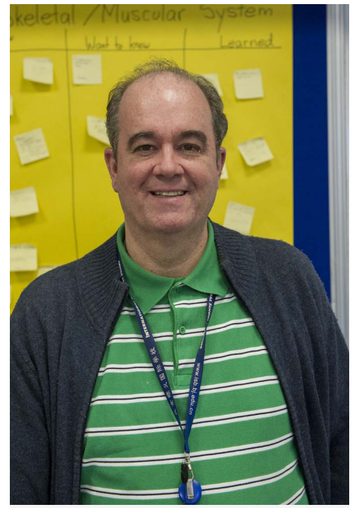
In his five years at ISB, Mr. Daw said he had seen the growing impact of tech infusion in learning. Now in its fourth year, the school's one-to-one laptop program has "really spurred innovation" among students, he said.

Five students have chosen computer science for their extended essay in the IB Diploma Programme over the past five years, a remarkable feat considering the subject isn't yet available at school.



During his early years at ISB, Mr. Daw helped develop elective technology courses that placed a strong focus on video, audio, gaming, publishing and presentations.

"We try to provide a wide gamut to inspire students' love for technology, but also to help them to improve at something that can promote their overall learning. Although we had technology in classrooms before I started at ISB, it was pretty standard," he said.



Harold Daw has helped spearhead ISB's tech-infused approach to education over the past five years.

"Now, we have gone beyond that to allow students access to a broader range of choices for assignments. We have kids who are doing blogs, audio and video work, from short movies to advertisements."

Mr. Daw pinpointed a TedX talk arranged by Amanda Song (Class of 2013) as a highlight reflecting students' willingness to immerse themselves in technology. Amanda is today a computer science sophomore at Columbia University and instructor of Girls Who Code, a national group aiming to bring more young women into lucrative tech careers. Her TedX talk themed "Transcending Boundaries" was held on September 6, 2012.

"We had parents, teachers and students who spoke. It was great to have such a wide variety of speakers and see it all come together so successfully," said Mr. Daw.

Journalism in the Digital Age

Michelle FlorCruz speaks about following in the footsteps of her father, a respected China correspondent, in a different era of newsgathering

Journalism has come a long way since printing presses churned out grubby black-and-white newspapers in the late 19th century. Today's journalists rely more on technology than ever. The media delivers news on digital platforms around the clock to meet the needs of their tech-savvy consumers. More people read and watch stories with the swipe of a smartphone instead of scanning newspapers, and they prefer to join the online discussion in the comments section instead of e-mailing (or writing) letters to the editor.

Michelle FlorCruz (Class of 2008) is at the heart of the technological transformation unfolding in journalism. The daughter of veteran correspondent for TIME and CNN Jaime FlorCruz, Michelle's initiation into journalism differed greatly from her father's in the 1970s, when the primary tools of the profession were a typewriter and camera. Michelle, who reports news from China and North Korea for the New York-based International Business Times (IBT), relies on social media for story leads and insights. Her articles are linked to other reports to give readers broader context of each story, while her Twitter handle straddles her byline.

Modernization of the media

"The digitization of news and communication has made journalism much easier. Reaching sources in different time zones or uncovering stories from around the world has become possible thanks to the help of the Internet and many social applications," said Michelle, whose break in the industry came just after graduating from ISB when she interned with CBS News during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. "However, it's a double-edged sword. Immense pressure has been placed on editorial staff to push stories on social media and be aware of traffic. We need to fight for retweets and the like against our competitors, bloggers and traditional news sources with digital arms."

While the way journalists do their job is changing, the fundamentals remain the same and as pertinent as ever. Journalists today still need to be able to gather information and tell a story.

Michelle noted that what makes digital journalism stand out from the traditional media is that "the Internet is virtually limitless." In the 24-hour news cycle, the need to produce compelling content that attracts views and clicks crucial for generating advertising revenue and increasing audience share is stronger than ever.

"As a TV news intern, I saw a lot of stories live and die by whether or not they were 'for TV,' meaning they needed an exciting visual component. In print, there is naturally a space limitation. Stories can be cut by hundreds of words and photo essays pared down because of space issues, which is rarely a problem online," Michelle said.

Bloggers and tweeters were unheard of just over a decade ago. However, today they are a key source for news and a driving force in setting the media's agenda. Their ever-evolving role has changed the way we receive news in the 21st century, fostering citizen journalism and giving rise to a global forum for discussion on current affairs.

Connecting with the audience

Michelle described the online community as "immensely valuable," especially during times of breaking news when information can be instantly shared. However, the ease of immediate access to information can threaten a key journalistic ethic: accuracy.

"Of course, there have been cases of inaccurate reporting at the hands of speedy updates, so the obligatory cautions apply to Twitter that you would for any source," said Michelle. "Beyond that, local tweeters and bloggers are often able to give an accurate sense of a situation in a way a correspondent or reporter on assignment who is dropped into a story cannot. Additionally, locally based Chinese bloggers or Weibo users offer a perspective that the official Chinese media can't or won't publish."

Tech infusion is a strategic component of 21st-century learning at ISB, where the school's one-to-one laptop program ensures students acquire the skills of "digital natives" to prepare them for changing realities. Teaching children to master the strengths social media is a skill Michelle considers worthwhile for aspiring journalists.

"When I was at ISB, being on Facebook was so taboo; it virtually had no educational value to it. I'm not saying that every kid should be constantly on it, but I think it is really important for schools to support students developing their 'Web presence.' Almost everyone I know in journalism has their own personal website, a medium that is slowly replacing the traditional resume," she said.

Tapping the alumni network

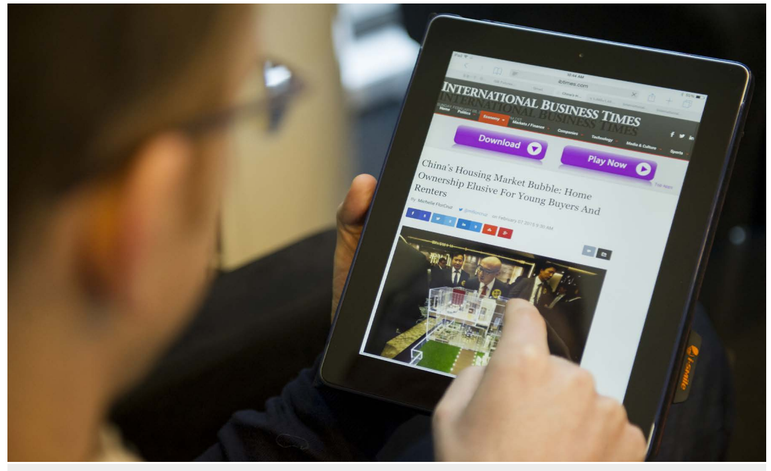
Michelle credits ISB for giving her the "tools for success" to acquire her communications and media degree from Fordham University in New York City, which paved the way for her career in journalism. However, one of the most important lessons she learned was the value of building relationships with peers and faculty, a key skill in an industry in which contacts are everything.

"The greatest thing ISB gave me was a network of amazing friends and acquaintances. I still frequently get together with ISB classmates in New York, where there is a decent sized group of us. They are great sounding boards and are always ready to celebrate or help problem solve. With friends all over the country and world, I know I'll always have a place to crash if a story ever takes me to their city," she said.

ISB's alumni network even helped Michelle gain a scoop last summer, when Jaime Lin (Class of 2011) drove her around suburban Pennsylvania for a story about a basketball academy founded by another ISB alumnus, John Alexander (Class of 2011).

Despite working for a growing digital global news publication that delivers international business news to around 30 million people worldwide every month, Michelle admits she still has a soft spot for hard-copy print media. Staff layoffs and even closures are a grim reality for newspapers globally as they seek to do more with fewer resources, but some are nonetheless proving that traditional media outlets can match it with digital competitors.

"I still receive magazines on my doorstep every month from my favorite publications and would be really upset if that stopped. Traditional print media is going to continue to go through some downsizing, but I still think there is a market for it," said Michelle. "IBT put Newsweek back into print this year, and for the first time in years was able to report that it was profitable. There is a model for print media that can succeed, but I'll leave that to the business people."



IB Times reporter Michelle FlorCruz (left) during her visit to ISB in January. The popularity of mobile devices (top) is changing the way news is reported and consumed.

Living the Tweet Life

Ever wondered what it's like to be a software engineer for a social media giant? Akihiro Matsukawa gives us the lowdown on metadata management at Twitter

Akihiro Matsukawa (Class of 2009) began working as a software engineer at Twitter shortly after graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2013 with a master of science in electrical engineering and computer science. During his studies, he interned at Google and San Francisco tech venture Sift Science. His experience cemented his career ambition to work with systems that handle large amounts of data.

What were some of the challenges of your studies?

I am really interested in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Since it's a relatively new field, there weren't too many undergraduate classes that taught it. There were, however, a lot of professors who were doing research in the field at Berkeley, so the biggest challenge for me was juggling participating in those research projects with the classes I needed to finish my degree.

What did you enjoy most about your major?

I really enjoyed its applicability. There are many majors where it's not exactly clear what you are supposed to do with that knowledge after graduation. Computer science definitely is not one of them. I use things I learned in school every single day as an engineer at Twitter.

Did your internships confirm or dispel any preconceptions you had about tech companies and the work involved?

I interned for two years at Google. It was a great place to work, as I had expected. I had a lot to learn from everyone I met, and the work environment couldn't have been better. It did somewhat dispel my notion of what exactly being an engineer at a tech company meant. In school, the solution to a typical problem is to come up with a clever algorithm. It's like solving a math puzzle. In reality, there are many other types of problems that need to be solved. A lot of people problems need both technical and social solutions. How do you make sure that the millions of computers in your data centers are all behaving correctly? How do you test your software? What if they are running different versions of a dependency? How do you and another person work on the Google search engine without stepping on each other's toes or breaking the program?

What advice would you give to someone eyeing their break in the tech industry?

The barriers to entry are so low, so much lower than when I was in high school. With some simple Googling and a book on programming, you can create iPhone apps or websites. If you are interested in it, you don't need to wait until school to get started. In fact, I work with plenty of self-taught programmers who studied something completely unrelated (some never even went to college). Don't worry about your iPhone app taking off, or making money. It's about the learning experience. That's what you should always prioritize.

How did ISB put you in good stead for your college studies?

ISB definitely prepared me well for managing my studies. When I came to college I was already well equipped with skills like identifying key concepts, time management, and asking good questions. The IB program also prepared me well to tackle a lot of the elective requirements of an engineering major, like math and physics.

ISB's Next Generation of Tech Talent

Meet two talented high school students hoping to make their mark on Silicon Valley.

Not everyone in high school knows what they want to study at college, let alone what career they want to pursue. But Ian Huang has a clear vision about his own future.

"I've always wanted to study computer science or engineering. Beyond that, I have a dream that's pretty sci-fi," hinted the Grade 11 student. "I want to combine human and artificial intelligence."

Tech has emerged as an enticing field for many students at ISB, where curriculum based on 21st-century learning and one-to-one laptop program has inspired more young minds to get wired.

A dystopic world where computers are smarter than humans could be cause for alarm, but Ian is far more optimistic when explaining his dream to combine "computational prowess with the human ability of learning."

"Through working with computers, I've discovered that there is this perception of computers as fast and really smart. Yet, at the same time, they are also very tedious to teach. They can calculate quickly, but they lack that human intuition," noted Ian, who participated in the 2014 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Los Angeles.

The ISB junior was bitten by the tech bug during a Grade 9 science project that required students to invent a gadget. Ian designed a cellphone that users wear in their ear, which he described as "basic step toward uniting human and artificial intelligence."

In the two years since then, he has shifted his focus from invention to academic research related to machine learning. In a project inspired by the congested Beijing traffic, he taught computers to design transportation networks better than humans.

Ian connected with Dan Zhang (Class of 2011), a senior undergraduate computer science researcher at Brown University, in 2012 during an ISB alumni Q&A session. The teenager noted that more young people are interested in computers due to their high-tech surrounds.

"We are growing up in an environment with iPhones and computers capable of sensing our movements, which is unprecedented in history. Because we have such a strong connection to gadgets, there is a sense that we can contribute to this field," he said.

Philipa Yu and Ian Huang were both inspired to pursue tech-related studies after speaking to alumni.

Philipa Yu is another young Dragon hoping to spread her wings in the tech world. The ISB senior has set her sights on computer engineering, with Yale, Stanford and Babson College among her top picks.

Like Ian, her tech passion was partly fostered through her involvement with Intel ISEF as a sophomore. The following summer, she began learning how to code.

Philipa said her mother, who studied biochemical engineering, was initially a "little hesitant" about her direction. However, the industry's culture of innovation and feedback from alumni at top colleges who visited ISB last summer dispelled any doubts in her mind.

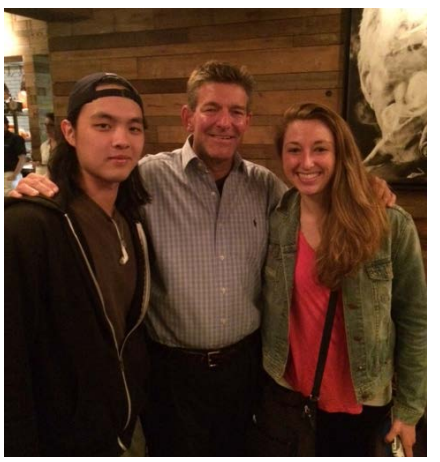
"The Silicon Valley reputation is that it is very free from constraints. You can pretty much take your idea wherever you want to take it. I find that really enticing," she said.

The region's other reputation as a boys club sways many young women away from tech, but Philipa is eager to join a growing force of females shaking up the tech industry.

"An increasing number of female engineers in Silicon Valley are paving the way forward, proving they are just as capable if not more capable than their male counterparts. It's dispelling the gender stereotype, but at the same time there is a struggle for women to be accepted. Part of me wants to accept the challenge," she said.

Dr. Razik Visits Alumni at Boston Reunion

Around 20 ISB alumni reconnected at a Boston reunion attended by head of school Tarek Razik, human resources director Mimi Lee and middle school principal Mark Hardeman. The February 4 gathering at the Barcelona Brookline Wine Bar and Restaurant provided an ideal opportunity to share memories and catch up on the latest exciting developments at the school. Thanks to Lexy Chiu (Class of 2011) for helping to organize the reunion.



Our New Community Relations Coordinator

You might be aware that we bid farewell in December 2014 to Mel Ker, our friend and colleague who worked with our alumni association for several years and has now moved on to other adventures. However, we are excited to introduce Kayla Chen as our new Community Relations Coordinator. Kayla brings enthusiasm and experience to the role having previously helped manage alumni relations for the University of Salford at its China office. Whether you want to apply for an alumni ID card, share a story idea for Rui Long, or just want to say hi to our friendly team, be sure to drop by our office next time you visit ISB!

Contact Us

Send a message via the ISB Alumni Association's Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/ISBAlumni

Visit the alumni page on the ISB website, which appears under the Community tab:
http://www.isb.bj.edu.cn/community/Alumni/Pages/default.aspx

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